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[SUSPICION.]

MY LADY'S LOVERS.

A NEW NOVEL.

BY AN EMINENT AUTHOR.

CHAPTER XVIII.

IN SEARCH OF THE LOST ONE.

While nature smiles, and hill and plain
Are tranquil as the sleeping sea,
And peace and plenty brightly reign,
I write and sob in misery.

It was Colonel Dashwood who had knocked at the door. Lucy bid him come in, and he entered with the quick, nervous step of one who has important news to tell.

"My dear children," he said, "the Duke of Blackfern has returned, and he brings news of Lady Pearl."

"She has been found," cried Lucy, leaping up. "Married and settled in some sweet little cot by the ever-changing sea, I suppose?"

"No," returned the colonel, gravely, "the news is, after all, no news of her. She did not elope with Hugh Egerton."

"Who was the happy man, if not he—her guiding star?"

"Lucy! do be serious for once. It is supposed that she has met with foul play. Hugh Egerton is with the duke, and it seems they have been examining the dykes as far as they could during the day—taking neither food nor drink. They

have come here for help to continue the search."

"But did she not send a letter to tell them she was gone?" said Lucy. "Of course, nobody saw it, but I understood one was written to that effect."

"You must not credit all you hear. Egerton and the duke must have good grounds for believing in foul play. They are having a hasty meal below, and start again directly with some of the men, with rakes and lanterns and torches. Friarly wishes to go with them."

"Indeed," said Meg, indifferently.

"And he has sent me as emissary to crave permission to absent himself."

"He may take as much furlough as he pleases."

The colonel looked at his youngest daughter with a quick, comprehensive glance. He was no great admirer of Sir Charles, in fact the baronet had no male friends worthy of the name, and he had felt some compunction in hurrying Meg into a marriage with him.

"If you and Friarly are not likely to make a happy match of it," he said, "you had better not go too far."

"He will do as well as any other, as I must needs marry," said Meg, drily.

The colonel shrugged his shoulders, and having finished his mission returned to the breakfast-room, where Hugh Egerton and the Duke of Blackfern were partaking of a cold repast with the haste of hungry men with no time to spare.

Sir Charles Friarly had not yet seen them, he had only heard of the proposed expedition, and elected himself a member of it. Perhaps he had reasonable grounds for anxiety, and felt it in-

cumbent upon himself to throw them off the scent. There must have been some urgent reason for his thrusting himself where he was not invited nor needed.

Remembering the last time he saw Hugh Egerton he also felt it necessary to have a few words with him in private, and accordingly he sent him a note asking the favour of a short interview in the library. Hugh had just read the missive as the colonel entered the room, and passed it over to the duke.

"I mistrust the fellow," he said, "and I suppose it is too late to rake up again that old affair I told you of?"

"Pearl seems to have given him the facility for insulting her," said the duke, gloomily, "but as you say—this is not the time to fall foul of him now. Let him come."

So Hugh went to the library where Sir Charles was awaiting him with a carefully prepared address of repentance which he was not allowed to deliver.

"Your request," said Hugh, curtly, "is granted. You can give us what assistance you please."

"I assure you, Egerton," said Sir Charles, "that ever since I made that horrible mistake in the wood I have never known a moment's rest. It is my nature. When I am roused by love or anger I am simply ungovernable."

"We start in ten minutes," said Hugh, with a cool, contemptuous air that made the other wince, "and assemble in the stable-yard."

He turned on his heel and left him without another word. Sir Charles had received an unexpected check in this reception, and he felt that he would have very little influence in directing their movements.

"I might as well stay at home," he muttered, "and spare myself the unnecessary fatigue. But if they—No, I must go with them—the suspense and doubt would be intolerable."

Neither Hugh nor the duke had known rest for nearly forty hours, but when they set forth again they showed no diminution of their powers. They were accompanied by two stablesmen, Tommy Dray, and Sir Charles Friarly.

"We took the dykes on the eastern side," said the duke, "now we must begin the west."

"Pardon me," said Sir Charles, softly, "but what grounds have you for supposing that anything has happened to Lady Pearl?"

"She may have met with a ruffian to match one she formerly encountered in the wood," said Hugh.

"And no help being near," said the duke, "Heaven alone knows what may be her fate!"

Sir Charles drew back and tried to fix himself upon Tommy Dray, but Lucy's lover had correct instincts and speedily showed that he did not value his society and joined Hugh in front. Then the baronet tried the stablesmen, but they only touched their forelocks and answered in monosyllables, which was their general demeanour, but Sir Charles took it to himself.

"They shun me as if I were the plague," he muttered, and falling farther back rode behind in solitary doubt and apprehension.

Sad and weary work, following the track of the dykes, examining the sluices and the deep pools, now and then hauling at some heavy object, with quickened hearts, to bring to shore a shapeless bundle of nothingness and sigh with relief.

At this weary work they kept on till the small hours of the morning, when they reached Gaunt House with its stagnant moat visible under the light of the stars.

"We must examine that," said the duke, pointing to the moat.

"A tempting spot, surely," sighed Hugh.

"There is no need to examine it in detail," said Sir Charles, hastily, "or to disturb the occupant of the house. My father fitted a sluice gate to it on the northern side, and if it is in order we can empty the moat in five minutes."

They went round to the northern side, where, after clearing away a large quantity of weed and plying levers with energetic hands, the gate, creaking and groaning, slid up and the sullen water rushed through to a dyke and dispersed.

They watched its fall by the light of lanterns and saw that nothing of moment came through. Then they made a circuit of the moat, examining the cozy bed by the light of flambeaux fixed to the rake heads and found no reward for their labours.

"We must work our way back to the Dumbekes," said the duke, with a groan, "taking the land on the west."

So they went on, and Sir Charles with a smile of satisfaction let them go.

"There is no need for me to stay," he thought, "I can take the shortest way home."

They did not miss him, and as one who has no love for the darkness he hurried on with an occasional glance back at the grim pile which his forefathers had aptly named Gaunt House, thinking of one whom he had last seen lying there with the pallor of death on her fair face.

The stars had now the assistance of the moon in her third quarter. She had risen and was half way in the heavens, so that the cold, uncertain light revealed enough to give odd shapes to objects far and near and to make the gloom of night more terrible.

Sir Charles was not constitutionally a nervous man, and fear was a thing he had only heard and read of. Like his friend Dr. Sabotson he had the sceptic's contempt for people who believe we are something more than galvanized clay, and his especial ridicule had always been reserved for those who believed in the return of the dead. Why then should he start and tremble at every slight sound and movement near him?

He was sorry he had left the search party so abruptly, but there was no rejoining them without traversing across a mile of heavy land. They were making a détour in a westerly direction, and he had wandered out of his way to the east. This he discovered when he found himself approaching the hollow where the Cells lay.

Uncanny places these Cells, even by day, with an odour of past suffering about them and still faintly echoing with the shrieks and despairing groans of those whom the fathers of the Church had imprisoned there. Sir Charles had heard of sights and sounds in these Cells and laughed at them, but there was no smile upon his face now.

It seemed an unmanly thing to him that he should totter and feel a childish impulse to run away, and bracing himself up he breathed an anathema upon all superstition and approached the Cells—and stood stock still.

"Oh! merciful Heaven," he groaned, "what is this?"

Only the figure of a woman, dimly defined, save as to the face, and on that the silver moon was shining—a face too familiar ever to be forgotten by him if his wrong-doing had not branded it on his memory.

"Mildred," he groaned, "spare me!"

The eyes were on his, but the form neither spoke nor moved. Coleridge said that no man could look upon a spirit and live—a speculation at the best, for he could not have seen one. If he had he would never have been able to confirm his theory. To live was to refute it. Sir Charles looked on the dimly defined form and did not die. He only reeled and fell, lying motionless, and bereft of all knowledge of things around him.

And there he lay on the dark ground, unheeding and unheeded, until the sun came up and poured down upon him his life-giving ray. Then he arose and shivering with cold and fear staggered back to the Dumbekes.

Only some of the lower servants were stirring, and they wondered as they saw the haggard man come rolling in as if he had been drinking. Without a word to one of them he crawled upstairs to his room, and pulling off his wet clothes rolled himself up in the blankets, and lay down, burying his verfaise.

"Is it true?" he moaned. "Do the dead return to haunt us? and am I a haunted man?—or was this some trick of the fancy? I was thinking of HER at the time. It must have been the work of imagination."

How little did it matter to him if it were. The horror of it was not lessened. The drunkard who cowers before the spectres and ghastly visions his fevered mind conjures up is not soothed with the conviction that they are but shadows; the maniac has perfect faith in his delusions.

"Oh! for sleep," he groaned, "or, better still, lasting oblivion."

By-and-by the first came to him, and he dived into the dark region of fever-haunted dreams, wandering about in a dark vault where chattering demons pointed their fingers at him, shrieking: "Poisoner!" in his ear.

Clarence knew nothing more awful before he ended earthly visions in the malmsey butt.

Then came an angel by, with bright hair, dappled with blood, shrieking: "Clarence is come—dead, false, perjured Clarence, Who stabbed me in the field of Tewkesbury."

And to Sir Charles there was one who might have been to him an angel on earth if he had not slighted her love, played her false, and schemed with his hired tool to compass her death. Through weary hours he was with her and awoke at noon unrefreshed.

His valet was in the room moving quietly to and fro, arranging his dress for the morning. Sir Charles asked him what time it was.

"Past one, Sir Charles," the man replied. "I did not think you wished to be disturbed."

"Disturbed, indeed," said the baronet, with a grim smile. "I have slept horribly."

"You have been talking a bit, Sir Charles," said the valet, standing with his back to him.

But he forgot there was a pier glass and his

master could see the reflection of his face. It wore a meaning smile.

"I lost my way in the marshes, Hinton," Sir Charles said, with an air of assumed carelessness, "and caught a cold. It fevered me and made me restless. Will you get me a brandy and soda?"

"Yes, Sir Charles."

The man left the room and the baronet lay back with his mind upon the rack. What had he said in his sleep?—and how much had the valet overheard?

"It is a lesson to me," he muttered. "I'll lock my door in the future."

Which was in accordance with man's great wisdom. There is a vast amount of doors locked when the steeds are gone! He had breathed his secret in his sleep, and his man had heard it. Ere long the air would be rife with whispers of it.

Sir Charles had his brandy and soda, dressed, and went down to a late luncheon. He partook of it alone, the other occupants of the house having finished half an hour before, eating a little and reflecting a great deal.

An inquiry of a servant made him acquainted with the movements of the search party. Hugh and the duke had been in to rest and were going on with their protracted labours. All the gentlemen in the house were giving what aid they could.

"Miss Meg—is she at home?" was his next inquiry.

"In the library writing, sir," was the answer.

"I'll go to her and get a yea or nay and then speed to town," he thought. "Not another day will I stay in this accursed spot."

It is singular that men, when they themselves have put a blight upon a place, will insist upon calling it accursed. It is an illustration of the ease with which they warp their minds to the most convenient belief, and the readiness they exhibit in shifting the burden of the blame from their shoulders.

Meg, fresh and blooming, was in the library, writing to Barnet Claverly. The unhappy Guardsman had written about a certain pair of beaver skin gloves he fancied he had left behind, and on that and other topics had managed to fill six sides of note paper. Meg was filling about the same quantity in telling him that his lost gloves were not at Dumbekes. "Nor do I think you have left ANYTHING behind you." But this she faintly crossed out, leaving it quite clear for perusal.

"I hope I do not disturb you," Sir Charles said, taking a seat near with the air of a man who meant to stay for a while whether he was in the way or not.

"Oh! no," replied Meg, faintly, and although her letter was not finished she hastily folded and placed it in an envelope.

"I find that I must get to town without delay," pursued Sir Charles, "and I cannot go without a definite answer to the question I put to you in the wood."

"A definite answer?" murmured Meg, with a growing whiteness in her cheeks.

"Is it not due to me?" he asked. "I have nothing to add or take away in what I said to you. I have no power to impress you better with the strength of my devotion."

"You are very kind, Sir Charles," replied Meg, vaguely.

"Will you be my wife? Let me have an answer."

"Sir Charles," said Meg, looking up like one gifted with sudden inspiration, "will you answer me one question?"

"I will if I can," he said.

"You surely will be able to tell me. Of what disease did Lady Friarly die?"

He fell back in his chair as if he had been shot or stabbed, with all the cool assurance gone out of his eyes and terror in its place.

"I ask the question," continued Meg, not looking at him, "because I believe she has met with foul play."

"And what—grounds—have you to make such an insinuation?" he asked, speaking with difficulty.

"None but one you will think very strange."

she replied. "I have seen Lady Friary's GHOST!"

Petrification might have set in upon him, so still was he, and Meg hurried on:

"You know people who die unfairly or are supposed to do, generally—that is, sometimes haunt the spot where they died, and I saw Lady Friary yesterday. She was behind you when you spoke to me and that was why I could give you no answer."

"Is this a jest?" he asked, hoarsely.

"Oh! no, Sir Charles," said Meg, with tears in her eyes.

"I believe it is," he returned, fiercely, "and an unseemly one. I have no resource but to resent it. There were other ways of refusing me, Miss Dashwood, more in accordance with our civilised code. Good morning!"

He was glad to get away with any excuse, for he was now sure that the spot at least was haunted. Never again dare he look upon that grim shadow, he felt he could not without verifying the theory of Coleridge and find death.

So he hurried out, leaving Meg in a state of unbounded astonishment, liberally dashed with satisfaction. In a quarter of an hour she heard the clatter of horses' feet and saw him riding away towards the station.

"I must tell Lucy what has happened," she said, "and perhaps she can help me to solve the depths of this mysterious departure."

Lucy was not easily found, but Meg, after a long search, unearthed her in a summer house, which might have been built from Cupid's own design, so adapted was it for a lover's tête-à-tête, with a comfortable seat and delightfully gloomy. Neither of the lovers was remarkably pleased to see Meg, but they soon forgave the intrusion when they heard her story.

"Odd, isn't it?" said Lucy. "What do you think of it, Tommy?"

"Foul play, decidedly," replied that gentleman, with the air of a young and promising superintendent of the police.

"Isn't he getting sharp?" said Lucy to Meg; "just my opinion; but really it is a serious matter, and we ought to speak to the colonel about it. Sir Charles is gone, you say?"

"Went off in a great hurry."

"Spurred by that restless rider, Conscience. Oh, Meg! I am afraid you will die an old maid."

"I'll marry Bet first," said Meg, with spirit, "and if you two don't mind I'll be married on the same day."

"We have just settled that it is to be this day two months," said Tommy.

"And of course you will be married from here?" said Meg. "It is quite convenient—only five miles drive to a church."

"Tommy wants it to be quiet—so do I," said Lucy, "and we vote for here."

"Then you, Lucy, will be here quite two months longer?" said Meg, thoughtfully.

"Excepting a stray visit or two to town."

"Then as the place will be dull don't you think Bet might come down again?"

"If he will come," said Lucy; "but I fancy he has been singed enough."

"At all events I shall give him the hint," said Meg, "and you will speak to the colonel about Sir Charles?"

"At once, and you need not fear the parental wrath. He was not over head and ears in love with the match."

Meg hurried off to put a postscript to her letter to Barnet Claverly, which being characteristic of the delightful freedom of their friendship, we give in full.

"P.S.—Having given you all the above news to read I have a bit of good news for you. Sir Charles has got his quietus and has left us. He was scared away by a ghost, which you shall hear all about when you come down next week. You will come, won't you? Should you be pursued by the Jews Lucy and I will arrange a hiding-place for you in the false roof over the clock tower, so that will be up to the time of day both day and night. It will be delightful to have you in secret hiding and stealing up to the trap-door at midnight with a basket of

provisions and a "flask of burgundy" such as the old knights always had with them. You won't want a feather bed—the dust is two feet thick. Au revoir, dear Bet, with one or two YOU KNOW WHAT * * * * *

CHAPTER XIX.

BEHIND PRISON BARS.

Where is the cheek's once brilliant glow;
The light of thine eye I cannot see;
Thy bosom is but heaving snow.
Who now would know thee?

GAUNT HOUSE, in addition to a doctor and a keeper, had a matron, Mrs. Newman, who to the eye seemed to be the last person on earth one would expect to find filling such a capacity in such a place.

She was young, not near thirty yet, but dressed in a Quakerish fashion that made her look older and increased the prominence of the lines of premature care that had gathered about her mouth and brow. She had once been very beautiful, and was not yet past the time when her dark eyes, full and lustrous, had a charm for man.

The doctor admired these eyes; but he sighed in vain. Between him and his matron there was a great gulf fixed—the gulf of a heart that had been turned to ashes and could no longer love any man. If she could have restored the fires of love Doctor Sabotson would still have been as far removed from her favour as ever.

There was a strange alliance between those two, a bond of gratitude and a bond of mutual help, of which more anon; but to show the nature of the communion between them let us slip in and see them at breakfast in a room adjoining the doctor's study, she sitting before the urn with a grave, proud air, he fidgeting with his toast and glancing at her from under his beetling brows.

"You have not made your report yet, Mrs. Newman," he said, suddenly.

"Is there any need for me to make one?" she asked.

"It is the usual thing."

"Your patients have passed the night as usual," she said; "the poor maniac calling herself Lady Pearl is weeping and moaning—the other creature is dumb silence."

"They eat their food?"

"The silent one does—like one who eats to gather strength for a journey."

"And she never speaks?"

"Never."

The doctor took a bite at his toast, ate the piece very slowly, and presently said:

"I trust you do not find your employment distasteful?"

"It is part of our contract," she replied. "I have no choice but to obey."

"Nevertheless, if you object to it—"

"I do not object."

"It would give me great pleasure to make your life as smooth as possible," he said; "it is possible to be happy even HERE, if you will forget that you had a past."

"I shall forget that," she replied, "when I die, or if my reason leaves me; otherwise the past is ever present with me."

"You are a proud woman," said the doctor, leaning forward with an ugly light in his eyes, "and a beautiful one. I would give something more than I possess to find the key to your heart."

"Forbidden ground," she said, calmly.

"Why, so it is," he answered, with a sigh.

"The key to my heart would avail you nothing; there is but the empty casket left. Have you any commands for me?"

She rose up with an air that awed him, and he merely answered "No." He was not a gentleman born—few doctors are—and was a little behind the times with his manners, or he would have opened the door for her. She swept out with a quiet grace and left him frowning.

"She will not bend," he muttered; "must it come to a breaking?—at present no; I have too much on my hands."

He struck a hand-bell twice and Crewel came stumping along the passage, unceremoniously opening the door, like a man who is sure of his ground and wishes to make a little demonstration of his power.

"Well?" he said.

"I am going to pay a visit to the silent patient," replied the doctor, "and wish you to accompany me."

"Why?"

"She is dangerous, isn't she?"

"Rather," said Crewel, with a grin; "she made a spring at me last night and fastened her teeth in my arm without uttering so much as a growl. There's the mark," he said, rolling up his sleeve; "good work for such small ivories, isn't it?"

"What did you do?" asked the doctor, anxiously.

"Oh! took her off," was the cool reply.

"You have not injured her—not struck her in the face——"

"Bah! no; I simply gently stopped her breath so that she could not hold on, then put her into a corner like a naughty child."

"We will go at once."

They passed out and ascended to a corridor on the first floor by a narrow back staircase originally erected for the use of domestics. On either side of the corridor were doors leading to rooms, and across one of them was a strong wooden bar. This Crewel removed, turned the handle, and signed to his master to enter.

"Keep an eye upon her," said the doctor, nervously.

"All right. I don't think she will attempt anything more just yet."

The room they entered had originally been used as a dressing-room, and was lighted by one small, narrow window high up, and now protected by bars. There was no furniture to speak of, a table fixed to the wall, a pile of cushions, and that was all.

On the latter lay the form of the unhappy Sunflower, with dress torn and disordered, a sorry spectacle—her face still retaining that immovable look and giving no sign that she knew of the doctor's coming.

"I hear you are better to-day?" he said, drawing near, with his trusty Crewel close behind him.

Her poor cold bosom rose and fell once and that was the only sign that she heard him.

"I hope you have no ill-will against me?" continued the doctor, "Your friends have placed you here for your good, as they believe, and as I believe. I shall be glad to give you a better room if you will show yourself more tractable."

He might as well have been talking to a statue so little did she appear to heed him. Crewel, who had a distaste for all quiet interviews, yawned audibly.

"Come, come," said the doctor, persuasively, "this sort of thing will not serve your turn. You understand me well enough and you are simply brooding over what you believe to be a wrong. Give it up, accept the inevitable, and live like a reasonable woman."

Her face now for the first time showed a softened expression, and she looked at him but did not speak.

"That's right," said Sabotson, softly, "I see we shall bring you round. You can have better apartments, comfortable dress, and the best of food—good wine, and you and I can be merry together—"

She softened yet the more, and the doctor exulted in his heart. He was succeeding in his purpose beyond his most sanguine expectations. Crewel, more disgusted than ever, for he hated anything approaching milk-and-water in human nature, had turned partly from them and was staring up at the small window.

"Let me help you to rise," the doctor said, extending his hand.

She took it, lay heavy in his grasp for a moment, then suddenly bounded to her feet and sprang towards the door which Crewel had in the insolent carelessness of his power left open.

In a moment she was outside, the door closed, the bar up, and the doctor and keeper made pri-

soners. Then a wild laugh was heard in the corridor and all was still.

Blandly staring at each other stood the two knaves, until Crewel, whose language was very often of an explosive turn, burst into some severe flowers of speech, only to be heard when the coarsest of ruffians are in a fury, and he finished off with an attack upon the doctor.

"Couldn't you have laid hold of her, you fool?" he said.

"Why weren't you attending to your duty?" muttered the doctor.

And then they stared at each other, images of concentrated fury and despair.

"I suppose we can't get out?" Doctor Sabotson said, at last.

"Not in a twelvemonth."

"But if we knock Mrs. Newman——"

"Won't hear us, as she is in the other wing and won't come here until to-morrow morning. We've got twenty-four hours of our own physic before us."

"This is no theme for jesting, Crewel," said the doctor, trembling with agitation. "If she gets clear of this place and we are here for a day she will bring ruin upon us?"

"She won't bring ruin upon me," said Crewel, surlily.

"But can't we get out? Is there no way of forcing the door, or this one leading to the bedroom? If we can do it in time to overtake her on the marshes we can bring her back."

"I tell you, doctor, we are fixed up as tightly as sardines, with only a little more elbow-room, and we have just as much power to get out."

"Hammer the door, Crewel. Mrs. Newman may hear us," said the doctor, damp with fear.

"I'll do it, but she won't hear us."

Crewel thumped and beat the door most vigorously for full five minutes, and then they sat down to wait. No answering footstep or welcome voice gladdened them.

"She will only think that it's the patient if she does hear it," said Crewel, savagely, "and as knocking is thirsty work and we are not likely to get anything to drink I'll do no more of it."

So saying he threw himself down on the pile of cushions vacated by Emilie de Launay, and taking out his tobacco box regaled himself with a quid, which he chewed with philosophical thoughtfulness, while the doctor paced up and down the room a prey to considerable agitation in the region of the diaphragm, and for half an hour neither uttered a word.

Suddenly the doctor pulled up and gave vent to an exultant shout.

"Crewel," he said, "what fools we have been."

"That's news," replied Crewel, sarcastically. "I found that out as soon as she had bolted the door."

"I don't allude to that—but the floor, man—the floor," screamed the doctor.

"The floor?" vacantly echoed the keeper.

"Yes, man—the floor; surely it is old and rotten and we can break our way through the ceiling——"

Crewel leaped up, and he and the doctor began to tear up the faded carpet that covered the floor. Beneath, the boards were old and worm-eaten and broken in places. The prospect of escape was a very bright one.

With a big clasp knife which he took from his pocket the keeper cut a gap in a place that was rotten, and he thrust his strong hands through the hole and with a mighty effort rent up a board. A cloud of dust followed this exploit and filled the air with pungent particles.

"Let me see," said Crewel, "what room is beneath this?"

"The old dining-room, I think," replied the doctor.

"Painted ceiling; no great trouble to get through that."

He thrust his foot down and sent it crashing through the thin canvas-covered boards that formed the ceiling. In a minute he had broken a hole large enough to get through, but there was still an ugly drop down.

"I think you had better go first," said

Crewel to the doctor, "you are a lighter man than I am."

With an impatient growl the doctor slid through and dropped, coming down in a very undignified position on the floor, so that for a time he had little breath in his body.

"Get out of the way," said Crewel, laughing, "we might have thought of the cushions."

These he dropped through until they made a respectable pile, when he followed the doctor, who was trying the door and muttering all sorts of anathemas on every form of lock and key.

"Why is this fast?" he snarled.

"Because it was your orders to lock up every place not in use," replied Crewel. "Mrs. Newman has the key. The windows are nailed up too."

"We can get out that way," said the doctor, "Kick out the window."

The small diamond panes framed in by lead yielded to the heavy foot of the keeper, and they sprang through to find themselves in a small courtyard with a high wall round it and the only door made, like the others, fast.

"I swear," said the doctor, as he shook it furiously, "that I will never have a door locked again. That woman has already had a clear hour before her. We've got our work to overtake her."

"If quite sure of the way she has gone," said Crewel.

The doctor groaned.

"It's ruin, more than ruin. Can't you get over the wall?"

"The moat's on the other side."

"Swim through it. Here—I'll give you a leg up. You can lay hold of that spout, and pull yourself up to the cornice. Now then!"

Crewel felt the case was urgent and was soon on the top of the wall, staring over with an expression of amazement that aroused the doctor's curiosity.

"What is the matter, man?" he cried.

"Somebody's been in the night and opened the sluice," Crewel replied. "The moat's empty—leastways there's only mud in it."

"Never mind the mud," said the doctor, impatiently. "Can you see anything of that woman?"

"No sign of her," said Crewel, laconically.

"Drop down and go round and ring the bell; Mrs. Newman will hear that. If she doesn't you can climb the gate."

All this was done in due course, but it took time, and more than a quarter of an hour elapsed before the maddened doctor was set free.

Then followed a fruitless inspection of the marsh. Look which way they would there was no sign of Emilie de Launay. They spent some hours also in walking to and fro, peering into empty dykes and behind the sluice mills—and they visited the Cells without any result.

"Lord Raidenstore went to the White Mill House, I believe," said Doctor Sabotson, sitting down in a very dejected state upon some of the débris by the Cells.

"Yes, I recommended it as a quiet, out-of-the-way place where the people would believe a yarn about falling into a hedge of brambles," said Crewel.

"You must go to him at once and let him know that the tigress has got out of her cage, and ask him what is to be done."

"I should think the best thing to do would be to put her QUITE OUT OF THE WAY if we got a chance."

"That's more in your way, Crewel, no doubt, but it is not safe. When a person has to retire you must induce them to do it quietly. Get back to the house and take the horse. If you want anything to eat and drink be as quick as you can about it."

Crewel lost no time, but the day was already far spent, and he must ride hard to get to the White Mill House, a lonely fishing inn ten miles off, before sundown. It was dusk indeed when he rode up to it, his horse larded with foam.

Lord Raidenstore came hurrying out, followed by the host, a man with a misanthropical expression of countenance acquired after many years of wretched, lonely life far away from all

mortal men save those who came on fishing expeditions.

"I thought it was you or the doctor," said Lord Raidenstore.

"Something's gone wrong at the menagerie," Crewel replied. "The tigress has got loose."

"My God!" exclaimed the nobleman, staggering back and holding on to the latch of the door for support.

"The doctor bade me come to you so that you might be prepared," said Crewel, getting stiffly down. "He leaves you to do what you please, but," lowering his voice, "if you will take my advice, you will go in search of her and stop her ROAMING."

(To be Continued.)

SCIENCE.

BATTERY CARBON.—A useful method of preparing cheap carbon poles for voltaic batteries has been devised by M. Mauri. It consists in taking finely-powdered graphite mixed with an equal weight of sulphur free from carbonate, and heating the mixture in a crucible until all the sulphur is fused. The temperature, however, should not be raised over 200 deg. C. When the mass is fluid it is poured into a suitable mould of metal, and a stout copper wire is inserted to serve for an electrode. When the mass is cool and solid it is ready for use. Its conductivity is practically as good as that of the best retort carbon, and as it is more electro-negative than simple carbon, the electromotive force of the cell is higher. By increasing the proportion of sulphur in the mixture a highly-resisting composition may be obtained, which can take the place of copper or platinum silver coils for telegraphic or electric lighting purposes.

A NEW swimming apparatus has been invented across the Atlantic. It consists of a light frame, carrying a float and longitudinal shaft, the latter having at one end a small screw propeller. The swimmer reclines on the float, and grasping a hand-crank in each hand and placing his feet on two foot-cranks, proceeds rapidly and easily, with his head comfortably out of water.

ELECTRIC lights have created a plague of flies at the hotels in a Transatlantic Southern watering-place. The heat of the gas keeps insects away, but the cool glare of electricity attracts the flies and moths in such numbers that they swarm in thick masses round the lights, to the great annoyance of the visitors.

DEMAGNETISING WATCHES.—An ingenious apparatus for demagnetising watches or other small tools has been invented by Mr. Hiram S. Maxim, of New York, the well-known inventor of an incandescent system of electric lighting. As the time-keeping qualities of watches are frequently impaired by the wearers coming near a dynamo-electric machine, the spread of these generators will probably give rise to a distinct necessity for the new demagnetiser. The principle of the apparatus consists in subjecting the magnetised watch to rapid alternations of magnetism, while gradually withdrawing it further and further away from the changing poles of the magnet which it is exposed to. At last the distance becomes so great that the final reversals of magnetism are inappreciable. This is effected by means of a bar electro-magnet mounted on a vertical axis which gives it a rotation in a horizontal plane. The watch is placed in a small pocket which is revolved by means of pulleys in an ever-changing vertical plane in front of the rotating poles of the magnet. At first the watch is brought very close to the shifting poles of the magnet, then gradually withdrawn. This is accomplished by mounting the watch-pocket on a carriage traversing a long screw shaft, which is turned by hand. In fact the turning of the shaft handle operates the whole machine, rotating the electro-magnet, revolving the watch in front of the magnet poles, and at the same time withdrawing it to the verge of the magnetic field. Watches quite disabled by magnetism can in a short time be entirely righted by this apparatus.

"Do not men nor women want to be with them. I, your entreaties, blessing Simon David of the family, hand that from the strong arm."

In Mirabell's bungalow on an after-work of Sir Hu-

They f— in Colonels. The command Friars am girl by Sir Hu-

The left fingers on and she leant, hor-

This m— her with u—

The sudden great wri-



[A LOVING VIGIL.]

SCARCELY SINNING. A NEW NOVEL. BY A POPULAR AUTHOR.

CHAPTER VI.

I hold it true, whate'er befal;
I feel it, when I sorrow most;
'Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all.

"Do not fail me, my daughter. Neither the men nor the women of our old race have been wont to fail when duty and honour called upon them. Duty and honour now appeal to you, and I, your father, aid their voices with my entreaties and commands. If you would win the blessing of your dying father, Miranda, wed Simon Dawson and restore to Lucius—the head of the family—our ancient home. It is a girl's hand that may raise the fortunes of our house from the dust; let that hand and her heart be strong and true."

In Miranda's pleasant little boudoir at the bungalow at Malaporte the orphan was sitting on an afternoon about six weeks after the death of Sir Humphrey Lovelace, and the words quoted above were those that had just met her eye.

They formed the conclusion of a long letter in Colonel Lovelace's writing, addressed to her. The connection between the usurer of Austin Friars and himself was clearly set before the girl by Sir Humphrey.

The letter slipped from the girl's nerveless fingers on to the lap of her simple black dress, and she leaned back in her chair and stared with blank, horror-stricken eyes at the opposite wall. This message from the dead had come upon her with unexpected and crushing force.

Her strength had been indeed tried of late. The sudden parting with her lover had given a great wrench to her fond heart; then following

quickly upon that came the terrible blow of her father's death. The latter might be said to have been the first real trouble that the girl had known. Of the mother, who had died during Miranda's infancy, she had only shadowy recollections and therefore no vivid regrets.

And now—now, ere two months had passed over her father's grave, came this fearful ordeal—unexpected and crushing as a thunderbolt out of a clear sky.

For Miranda had not been in any way prepared for it.

Major Percival was not a man of very acute observation, but he had nevertheless formed certain suspicions since Miranda had been under his charge. Perhaps her trouble had rendered her incautious; or perhaps the fact of several letters having come to her from Frank Leslie, who could not resist sending a few words of fond condolence, may have opened the old soldier's eyes to some degree; at any rate, it is certain that he had embraced the idea that his young charge was not quite so heart-free as her father had told him.

The major had had little experience of the softer sex, and, besides, his natural kindness of spirit made him shrink from wounding in any slightest degree the heart of the orphan girl committed to his charge. Hence he could not resolve to tell Miranda of the charge entrusted to him by Sir Humphrey Lovelace, and put off the evil day of necessary explanation as long as he could.

But his own failing health speedily reminded him how necessary it was that he should seek the temperate land of his birth, and at length the major found he must break the matter to his ward.

Even then he could not face a personal explanation until the ice was broken, and as the most ready way of performing the latter operation he handed to Miranda the letter which her father had written to her on the morning of the fatal tiger hunt, and which the major had found amongst Sir Humphrey's papers.

The girl took the message from the dead for

perusal in the retirement of her own apartment.

She opened it with flowing tears and tender interest, expecting to find loving words and anxious paternal counsels, prompted by that strange presentiment of quick-coming death which she knew from Major Percival her father had felt.

What she really found we are aware.

For a long time after the reading of the letter the girl sat in a state of semi-stupor. She was conscious of the surroundings only in the hazy manner of one in a trance. Her very heart scarcely seemed to beat, or her bosom rise and fall with the breath of life.

Then the stupor passed and all her soul rose in hot rebellion.

What could this terrible thing mean? Had she not suffered enough already in the loss of her beloved parent and the separation from the man who held her heart? In a few short weeks would not the breadth of continents lie between her and Frank Leslie? Was all this not enough without the dead hand of her father rising, as it were, from the tomb and putting the lovers asunder for ever?

How could she submit? How could she crush her heart thus, and perhaps—still worse—blight the life of her beloved? Was any trial ever so bitter? What would she not have given now that she had had the courage to speak out and avow the whole truth to her father while he had ears to hear and such avowal was possible. He had ever been a tender parent, and he would have forgiven her, not desolated her heart.

But now—now what was there to appeal to but that green mound in the peaceful English burial-ground, from which could come naught of response to saddest sobs or passionate prayers.

No! She COULD not submit—she could not bear it!

And the hot tears flooded down.

Then after an interval Miranda's mood changed to a dreary calm. She thought of her brother Lucius, of the old honour of the family,

of the fact that no Lovelace had ever hesitated at any sacrifice for faith and loyalty. On many a battle-field the men of the race had poured forth their blood like water in defence of king and country, and the women of the line had been worthy mothers and wives and daughters of such men.

Should she be the sole degenerate Lovelace? The girl's face flushed like fire at the thought, and her brain reeled with the tumult of the mental struggle. At one moment love was in the ascendant. Come what would she would never be false to Frank. Then honour and filial duty became victorious. Happen what would she dared not sully the honour of her house nor incur a father's curse. And so in the uncertain strife of a tempestuous heart, sobs and bitterest tears, the sunny afternoon wore on, nor brought Miranda Lovelace in aught nearer to a decision.

When later on the ayah found her darling there, Miranda lay half fainting upon a divan, overcome by the long and painful struggle.

The faithful Hindoo could render but little consolation to her young mistress. The commands of the "sahib colonel" while living had been her law and she dared not incite Miranda to break or neglect them now her old master had passed from earth. But none the less her sympathies were with the lovers, and the weeping girl felt this and was grateful.

Meanwhile, Major Percival, who was riding to a village at some distance to bid farewell to a collector there whom he knew, was looking forward to the next morning and the inevitable explanation with his ward which it would bring with much disquiet. Never till then had he realised the onerousness of the charge imposed upon him by his old brother-in-arms. If Miranda really loved, how would she take her father's letter and his own explanations? Would she, perhaps, give way to tears, or to petulant anger? He would far rather have faced a row of levelled rifles than a girl's tears or reproaches.

But fate spared the major.

During his absence the post arrived at the cantonment. There were several letters for the major (who had taken up his residence at Colonel Lovelace's bungalow), one from a lady friend for Miranda, and some newspapers.

The girl sighed as she listlessly opened the missive of her fair correspondent. She had hoped for a letter from Frank, and thought perhaps it might have aided her in her great trouble. Besides, it was strange that he had not written. Why, she had had no word from him for nearly three weeks, when he had sent her a tender letter, full of pitying condolence.

She read her letter, full of feminine small talk, with languid interest, until at length her eyes fell upon a paragraph which for a moment caused her heart almost to cease its pulsations. It ran thus:

"By the way, I suppose you have read in the newspapers all about the terrible affair at Meezerabad by this. It will be sure to be in them. We were told of it by a gentleman who had been in the neighbourhood. It is very sad and really quite alarming. Such audacity! We shall soon begin to consider that we are scarcely safe at such stations as ours or even yours at Malapore."

Miranda let the letter fall to the floor, and seizing the papers tore open their wrappers with trembling fingers.

What had come to the devoted spot where dwelt her light of life? Was it pestilence, or tornado, or fire?

In the "North-West Provinces Argus" the girl's anxious eyes speedily lighted on a column headed in large type "The Disaster at Meezerabad."

Her eyes flew over the lines.

Their purport was soon gained.

It appeared that a gang of Dacoit robbers, numerous and well-armed, had attacked the remote and unprotected little town for the purpose of plunder. A few of the richer and more wealthy natives had endeavoured to protect their property, and, headed by the collector of

the district and another English civilian, had made a gallant fight. So numerous, however, was the band of robbers that they were enabled to overcome all resistance, and the greater part of the little band, including both the Englishmen, were slain. Exasperated by this resistance and the loss of many of their own number, the thieves, after having looted the town, carried off several of the principal inhabitants as captives to ransom, and set fire to the place. Meezerabad was at present desolate, save for the jackals and vultures which battened on the slain; but a strong detachment of native troops had been ordered to the scene, and it was supposed they would follow on the tracks of the robbers, inflict condign punishment upon them and deliver the captives.

Miranda read to the end, then the paper slipped from her hand, and with a low cry she sank to the floor in a dead swoon.

Nona, coming in an hour later, found her mistress insensible. It was long before the faithful attendant could recall her to consciousness, so soundly had the springs of life been shaken. But by slow degrees Miranda was won back to a knowledge of things around and of her own bitter pain.

For several days she was too ill to leave her room or see her guardian. Then at length, when she had an interview with that gentleman, who was terribly startled at her altered appearance, she informed him with a strange calm that she had read her father's letter, was obedient to his will, and would accompany the major to England at any moment. Of the news she had learned she said no word, nor of her love, nor her despair.

CHAPTER VII.

Not long did her life for this sphere seem intended. For pale was her cheek, with that spirit-like hue Which comes when the day of this world is nigh ended.

And light from another already shines through.

WHEN Major Percival found that Miranda had finally determined to fulfil the wishes of her dead parent and become a living ransom for the home of her ancestors, he lost no time in hurrying on his preparations for the return to England.

Truth to tell the death of his old and well-beloved friend and the detention in India had told upon the major terribly during the last few weeks, and he had begun to view the contingency of his longer stay there with considerable apprehension both on his own account and that of his ward.

For himself his health appeared to be so thoroughly broken that nothing but the bracing air of his own native land could be of any avail. So far as Miranda was concerned, day by day her steps became slower, her lovely face paler, her eye more heavy and her tone more sad. It was evident that a more lengthened residence amidst scenes which hourly recalled her dead father and lover could but lead to one consummation—an early death.

In a few days passage was secured by the next P. and O. boat from Calcutta, and Miranda, Major Percival, and the major's trusted valet, took their leave of Malapore.

The major had decided, against Miranda's wishes, that it was not practicable to take Nona with them to Europe. The old ayah was inconsolable, but Percival remained inflexible both to his ward's request and the Hindoo woman's tears, and a young English girl who was returning to her native land was engaged as Miranda's attendant.

On Miranda's part it was a sad leave-taking. At this out-of-the-way Indian station the young English maiden had passed all the years of her girl-life, those years which, come what may of pleasure and of peace in after time—still always appear in the retrospect to be the brightest of all and to constitute perhaps the best realised part of life.

But it was not alone that the Indian landscape, with its broad rice fields and swaying palms, was so familiar and beloved that Miranda

grieved. But it was that here in this torrid land the girl would leave the graves of those whom she had loved best on earth—or ever would love. This was her great grief—a sorrow to which all else was as naught.

But when the first stunning blow of a great shock is over, the spirit soon regains something of its sensitiveness and can realise smaller and less important wounds.

So it was with Miranda Lovelace. Amongst the humbler folk around her at Malapore she had been regarded with an almost idolatrous affection. The soldiers of her father's command, the people of the little town, the villagers afar, even the tabooed and outcast pariahs of the wilderness, each and all had experienced Miss Lovelace's help and kindness in all times of trouble or affliction.

So the parting was a very sad one on all sides.

The Asiatic portion of the homeward journey presented nothing eventful. At any other time it would have had much of interest for the orphan girl, but the changefulness, novelty, and excitement of travel failed to wake to life her crushed spirits and sad heart.

At Alexandria, to Major Percival's great concern, Miranda suddenly betrayed symptoms of serious illness. These developed themselves with such alarming rapidity that the major speedily found that it would be impossible for him to convey his charge to England by the next Mediterranean steamer, and he, therefore, reluctantly determined to remain for a time at the old Egyptian town.

It soon became apparent that Miranda was suffering from the earlier symptoms of severe fever.

Major Percival had but little experience of illness, save in the suffering brought about by bullet or bayonet, or the type of jungle fever, and he was, in consequence, useless in such an emergency. Fortunately he secured the services of a remarkably skillful French physician, who had settled at Alexandria and gained great repute there. But another difficulty of hardly less moment remained—the finding a good and trustworthy nurse for the sick girl.

The doctor surveyed the flushed face, whose febrile excitement could not veil its great beauty, with evident interest. When his examination was over he signed to the major, who stood by with an anxious and troubled countenance, to follow him from the room.

"Major Percival," said the doctor, in excellent English, "I will not attempt to conceal from you the gravity of the case."

Something very like a sob shook the old soldier's deep, rough voice as he asked, hesitatingly:

"You do not think—"

A choking at the throat prevented the completion of the sentence. During the short time that they had been together the orphan girl had grown very dear to her father's friend. The war-worn soldier had learned to look upon Miranda almost as a daughter and to love her as one.

"I will be very frank with you, major," responded the Frenchman. "Even had this lady been your own child I should have considered it best to apprise you of the extent of the danger. My patient may pull through, and she may not. The chances are about equally balanced. When this particular kind of fever attacks the young and healthy we generally so reckon the probabilities."

The major groaned. He had but a few short weeks previous closed the father's eyes—was some malignant destiny about to condemn him to perform the same sad office for the daughter—this bright, innocent maiden, whom he had known and loved from childhood?

"I say to you, in the words of your own great national poet, 'Dispute it like a man,'" the doctor went on. "In any case it is best to know the worst, and in such seizures as this it is especially advisable that I should tell the patient's friends the extent of the danger, because it is only by so impressing them that I can ensure that minute and constant care in nursing upon

which all depends. My visits and drugs can do little in such cases."

"I have been used to nursing," said the major, with anxious eagerness. "I have saved—under Heaven—many of our poor fellows when down with jungle fever and—"

The doctor's swarthy face wore a slight smile of amusement as he extended his hand to check the major's voluble protestations of his skill and care.

"I have no doubt of it, Major Percival," he said. "By the pallet of a sick Sepoy one could not wish a better attendant. But when it comes to soothing the ravings of a delirious child like this you are not quite the fitting attendant. And the worst of the matter is, I fear I cannot just at present put my hand on the right kind of person. I should not like to trust your ward to one of these Egyptian women. I should like an English, French, or German nurse. However, one of the Alexandrine will do to sit by Miss Lovelace for to-night, and I will spare no pains to secure a suitable attendant by the morning if one is to be found in the locality."

And the doctor bowed himself out.

The night was an anxious and sleepless one for the major. He did not attempt to seek his own couch, but paced to and fro the long, narrow room, his slippers falling noiselessly upon the Oriental rugs which covered the floor. At frequent intervals he varied the sad monotony of his vigil by a visit to the sick chamber.

He did not enter, however, lest haply he might drive from his ward's pillow that welcome sleep which would give to her troubled brain rest and respite. Instead, he would draw cautiously aside the heavy portiere which curtained the doorway and peer into the room.

The result, however, was always the same. Miranda's eyes were unnaturally bright and widely opened, and her flushed face moved uneasily on the pillow. Beside, under the shaded lamplight, sat the tawny, watchful Egyptian whom the doctor had sent as a temporary attendant.

On the morn of the anxiously-expected morrow Major Percival found his charge much worse, and was greatly relieved by the early appearance of Dr. Grandet, accompanied by a European nurse.

The Frenchman shook his head gravely after his interview with his patient, from whom no coherent replies to his questions could be obtained. He then briefly introduced to Major Percival the woman who accompanied him.

The major surveyed with much interest this attendant upon whom Miranda's welfare so largely depended.

She was a very young and remarkably handsome woman—English evidently. Probably she had not seen the passage of more than nineteen summers, and the soldier would not unnaturally have doubted the prudence of placing so young a nurse in a post of such responsibility had he not been impressed by the remarkable and almost stern gravity of the girl's beautiful face.

It seemed the countenance of one who had suffered much. The cheeks were pale, the eyes sad, and at the corners of the firm, clear-cut mouth there was that slight droop which so often owes its origin to bodily or mental suffering.

But the trait in the stranger's appearance which most impressed Major Percival and filled him indeed with an astonishment which had something of awe in it was the girl's extraordinary resemblance to his ward. True, Miranda's cheek had borne the blush of the heart petals of a June rose, and the face of this woman was of marble pallor; true, too, that in past days Miss Lovelace's big violet eyes had shone with the gay light of a summer dawn, and those large orbs which now met the major's own, though violet too, looked pale, as if their colour and lustre had been stolen away by many tears. Still, making all allowance for these points of difference, the sick girl tossing on the couch and the calm-faced woman who came to tend her might have passed for twin sisters.

The nurse was plainly but neatly attired in a style well befitting her office.

"I have been so fortunate, Major Percival,"

said Dr. Grandet, as he introduced the young woman, "as to find what I sought with but little trouble. This young lady," and he bowed to the nurse with a Frenchman's courtesy, "comes to me with the very highest credentials."

The major bowed.

"I hold myself fortunate," he said, cordially, "in securing the services of—"

He hesitated.

"Of Mademoiselle Hesba Chepstow," added the Frenchman.

But as the major continued to gaze at the sad, beautiful face he became so struck by its extreme youth that he hesitated nervously to endorse his own recent self-congratulations, and said instead to the physician, in French:

"But, monsieur, is mademoiselle not too young for so responsible a post?"

"Not at all," responded the Frenchman, with a slight smile as he observed a pink flush creep up into the pale cheeks. "And I beg that you will be more prudent, monsieur, for Mademoiselle Chepstow speaks and understands French excellently."

It was the major's turn to feel discomposure. But he was an English gentleman and the fine instincts of his class came to aid.

"I beg ten thousand pardons, Miss Chepstow," he said, "and I think you will forgive me, as my indiscreet question was prompted by anxiety on my ward's account."

"Pray do not apologise, Major Percival," replied the nurse, earnestly. "I can quite enter into your feelings upon the subject."

The girl's voice was singularly sweet and low, and her intonation and expression were those of a lady.

"To set any lingering doubts at rest," said Dr. Grandet, "I will tell you, major, how I found Mademoiselle Chepstow. One of the steamers of the Messageries Impériales entered the port only yesterday. I expected to meet an old schoolfellow and did so. Amongst other topics of conversation he casually told me that an English lady had died on board on the previous day and that her husband was almost insane from grief. He went on to speak of a young English companion who had nursed her through her illness—it was the same kind of fever as Mademoiselle Lovelace is suffering from—so carefully and well that the surgeon of the steam packet could not say enough in her praise. I considered mademoiselle's arrival almost an interposition of Providence, at once sought her out, found that she was willing to take the post, and here she is!"

Major Percival could scarcely be other than satisfied with this recital. He expressed himself to that effect and Miss Chepstow was at once installed as nurse in Miranda's sick-room.

She proved herself all that had been said of her. Unwearied in her care of her patient, obeying the doctor implicitly in every instruction, quiet, enduring, uncomplaining, the sad-eyed girl was the very ideal of a sick-nurse.

As the days went on her services became hourly more and more indispensable. For the fever increased steadily until for weary days Miranda's life hung in the balance. Neither twilight, eve, nor balmy morning brought sweet sleep to the ever-open, strangely lustrous violet eyes. And when the delirium was at its height one name only was on the never-silent tongue.

"Frank! Frank! Come to me—come back to me, Frank!" was ever the cry of entreaty and pain.

The major would come often and sit beside the girl's pillow, facing the silent, attentive nurse on the other side and listening to his ward's pitiful plaint with a grey, set face.

"Who is Frank?" he would ask himself; and failing an answer he would shake his head gravely and opine that when Miranda recovered there might be rocks ahead, and that her union with Simon Dawson, junior, might not be quite so certain as he had hoped.

Observe, the major in all such speculations always said "when" and never "if" in regard to Miss Lovelace's recovery. That she would recover he never permitted himself to doubt.

The French doctor by no means shared in this certitude. Indeed, when there came at last a

night—the crisis of Miranda's illness—when he too sat by her bedside until morning light, he did not hesitate to affirm that he only did it as a duty, for that his patient could not survive the night.

But the man of science was wrong and the old soldier right.

As the three watchers sat there in the unbroken silence—for poor Miranda was then too weak to rave or even speak—the deep stillness drew the two men into a troubled slumber as they sat.

Only Hesba's keen eyes were watching—only Hesba's quick ears were listening. As her sad, violet eyes dwelt with a tender regard upon the poor fever-burned face and parched lips she noted with a thrill of deepest joy that the blue-veined lids at last descended over those ever-wakeful orbs, violet as her own. Then she bent her head down and saw that the sufferer's breast rose and fell with a soft, billowy motion. She heard from the dry lips equable, deep-drawn breath. She even saw upon the hot forehead the dew of a pain-assuaging perspiration, and she knew that her charge was saved.

Tears, happy tears, rose in Hesba's eyes as involuntarily she sank on her knees by the bedside and with clasped hands poured out her thanks to the Giver of all good things.

At that moment the doctor awoke.

The first object upon which his eyes fell was the kneeling girl, her golden head bent down upon the coverlet.

A glance of mingled amusement and contempt crossed his lips, for he was one, like so many of his countrymen, who had broken away from the faith learned at his mother's knee and had wandered to the arid deserts of unbelief.

But the next moment his eyes turned to the pillow and he started in extreme astonishment. Then he bent lower over the sleeping girl and a look of joyful surprise came over his dark, handsome face, and when Hesba, her orisons over, rose to her feet, he said, with quiet respect:

"You do well to give thanks, mademoiselle, for surely this girl's restoration is well-nigh a miracle. Ah!"

The exclamation was caused by the major's nose giving premonitory symptoms of indulging in a stentorian fit of snoring.

The doctor instantly awakened him with scanty scruple.

"Your ward is saved," he whispered. "Look!"

The old soldier knew sufficient of the complaint to recognise the truth of his companion's assertion.

"Let us leave the room," continued Grandet. "Mademoiselle is in the best of hands."

And he and the major passed out.

From that night slowly but surely Miranda gained health and strength, helped on towards recovery by the unremitting care and devotion of Hesba Chepstow.

As time went on, too, a strong bond grew up between these two girls, so strangely alike in person, in face, in voice, even in mode of thought.

When Miranda first regained sane consciousness and looked up at the face bending over her which seemed her own, she deemed it but one of her own sick imaginings—a phantom like the shadowy forms of her father and her lover which had stood by her in the hours of delirium.

But these first involuntary shrinkings of fear soon gave place to a tender affection for Hesba. And when later Miranda learned from Major Percival of Miss Chepstow's unceasing watchfulness and care the feeling of gratitude in her breast strengthened greatly her first liking for her nurse.

Major Percival was well content with his ward's penchant for the English girl. He too had learned to admire Hesba for her unflagging attention to duty. That was a virtue which he, as a soldier, could readily recognise and appreciate. And beyond this he had come to feel towards Miss Chepstow much of the paternal affection which he had for his ward herself.

Hence, although Miranda might now have dispensed with a nurse, as she was rapidly passing through a state of convalescence to assured health, the major still retained Hesba's services

as a friendly companion for Miss Lovelace, and he did this with the more alacrity as the English girl who had accompanied them from Calcutta had tired of their prolonged stay at Alexandria and obtained permission to take service with an English family homeward bound.

CHAPTER VIII.

Like warp and woof all destinies
Are woven fast,
Link'd in sympathy like the keys
Of an organ vast.

As the days of Miranda Lovelace's convalescence went on and strength returned to her enfeebled frame and a brighter lustre to her eye the girl evinced an hourly increasing partiality for her to whose assiduous tendance she, humanly speaking, owed her life.

She could hardly endure that, during her waking hours, Hesba Chepstow should be absent from her side. Nor was the remarkable affection of Miranda for her nurse less warmly reciprocated by the object of it. Hesba Chepstow, on her part, had learned to love with a more than sisterly devotion the fair girl whom she had tended through the long, anxious hours, and the hard-faced, taciturn, but kindly-hearted guardian was well content that it should be so.

As her strength gradually returned Miranda was able to sit up in the curious, quaint, semi-Oriental rooms of a European resident at Alexandria, to whose house the major had removed his charge at an early stage of her convalescence under the impression that the change would be beneficial to her.

With Miranda's increasing strength came back her former almost apathetic sadness. What had life for her? Those whom she loved best lay beneath the Indian earth. Of her brother Lucius she had seen little since childhood's days, and her remembrances of him were but fitful and shadowy. She was content, in a dull, hopeless way, to marry this stranger for her brother's sake and in obedience to her dead father's commands, but she would but be a wife in name, for although she might give her hand she had no heart to bestow.

But the girl's affection for her nurse soon revealed to her one fact concerning Hesba.

It was that the latter was as sad-faced as herself and as heavy of heart.

Marvellous as was the likeness between the two girls, this common trait increased the resemblance until apart it had hardly been possible for a casual acquaintance to discriminate between them.

In Miranda's breast there arose presently a great desire to know somewhat of Hesba's past life. It was not difficult for Miss Lovelace to discern that her late nurse—now companion—was unhappy, but her own covert questioning could extract from Hesba no avowal either of the fact or its causes.

That the girl was a lady and possessed of a refined and cultured mind it was easy to perceive; that she was very poor the extreme plainness of her attire and many minor circumstances showed plainly. But beyond these facts, patent to anyone, Miranda knew nothing of her companion.

The veil of reserve and reticence was, however, to be suddenly lifted.

Miss Lovelace had regained sufficient strength to warrant her guardian in moving her, especially as the French doctor advised that a more bracing air and a pleasant change of scene should be sought.

Acting under this counsel Major Percival determined, in place of pursuing a more direct route to England, to take steamer to Italy and proceed home by Switzerland, Germany and France, devoting the principal portion of time to the health-restoring air and the mountains and lakes of the land of William Tell.

It was decided that Miss Chepstow should accompany them. Indeed Miranda could not endure the thought of parting with her new friend. Hesba was to remain with the colonel's daughter as travelling companion and to accom-

pany her to England, where Hesba had given Miranda and the major to understand that she had a mother and other relatives.

The day before that fixed upon for their departure from Alexandria the English mail came in, bringing several letters for the major and his ward and one solitary missive for Miss Chepstow. They were all together in the usual sitting-room of their dwelling, and each was soon absorbed in the perusal of the several epistles.

Suddenly a low, irrepressible sob burst from Hesba's breast, and the next moment she rose hastily and, with the open letter in her hand, hurried from the room.

Both Miranda and the major looked up with concern on their faces as she did so, and the former noted that her companion's eyes were brimming over with tears and that the sheet which she held in her hand was black-edged.

Both, too, heard, as the girl passed along the passage which led in the direction of her own room, that she broke into a passion of low, repressed sobbing.

"Miss Chepstow has heard bad news, I fear," observed the major, anxiously.

"Dear Hesba, my heart aches for her," rejoined Miranda. "There is always trouble in her life, I think, for the sunshine of a smile comes so seldom to her face."

"As seldom as to yours, my child," said Major Percival.

There was something in the tone of implied reproach.

"Dear guardian, if my face is sad it is not that you have not done everything to make me happy," cried Miranda, impulsively. "But I have every reason for sadness. Heaven grant that Hesba has not as great cause."

"You have truly cause for sadness. What greater than the death of a beloved parent could indeed exist? Still, you must remember, my dear young lady, that Providence forbids us to repine at our afflictions without measure. For such a father as I am aware my dear old friend was a life-long, regretful remembrance were not too much on a daughter's part, but time should temper the poignancy of sorrow until sad memories become subdued into a tenderness which has naught of bitterness remaining."

Miranda shook her pretty head and sighed, nor gave other response to the major's well-meant consolation.

He did not know that her heart had been doubly stricken and that she mourned not only a sire but a lover.

And how different the sorrow!

Surely not less deep or sincere for one than the other, but characterised, of necessity, by different influences on a young life. The parent was identified with the past, and sorrow for him was mixed with memories of bygone happy days; but around the lover's image had clustered all the future hopes of a young life, and now these were for ever crushed.

Neither guardian nor ward cared to continue the conversation. The former presently took up an English newspaper which had arrived by the same mail as the letters, and the latter, after an interval, rose from her seat and left the room, noiselessly.

Her intention was to seek Hesba Chepstow and administer what was possible of consolation. Miranda had shrank from intruding upon her companion in the early moments of her solitary sorrow, but surely when the first violence of her grief had perhaps passed the presence of a kindly face, the tender tone of a sympathetic voice could not be distasteful even to the reserved and reticent Miss Chepstow.

Miranda tapped gently at the door of her late nurse.

She was bidden to enter by a low, stifled voice.

Advancing into the apartment, Miss Lovelace found Hesba seated in a low chair by the window in an attitude of the deepest dejection. The black-bordered letter had fallen from her nerveless fingers to the floor and her lovely violet eyes were red with weeping.

(To be Continued.)

FACETIAE.

A REAL SALVATION ARMY.—The London Fire Brigade.
Punch.

THE PROPOSED NEW FISH MARKET.

WHAT would be the result to the whitebait if it had to be served up after coming from Black Fryers?
Punch.

TO GIRTONIANS.—Wanted, for the prospected Holloway's College, a few female private tutors. No male "coaches" need apply.
Punch.

THE POOR LITTLE GUYS who have been compelled by unthinking parents to walk about in long skirts, antique cloaks, and coal-scuttle bonnets, have caused so much laughter that the dress is now called the "Grinaway Costume."
Punch.

"THE STATE OF THE APPROACHES TO BILLINGSGATE MARKET," says a City father, "has been something too offal!" [The Mud-Salad district hasn't sensibly improved.]
Punch.

HOUSEHOLD WORDS.—Ma and pa.

Moonshine.

IF A YANKEE were to take a house he would not be surprised to see the tax-papers come—he naturally would expect-a-rate.
Moonshine.

STRAPPING FELLOWS.—Barbers.

Moonshine.

A LIGHT SHIP.—A burning vessel.

Moonshine.

THE elephant that recently arrived from America came, of course, over the Grand Trunk Line.
Moonshine.

FOOT NOTES.—Dance music.

Moonshine.

BRED WINNERS.—Rare horses.

Moonshine.

PAGE BOYS.—Authors.

Moonshine.

STORAGE OF SUNSHINE.

PROFESSOR SHARPLES (to Sambo recumbent in the open, under direct solar influence): "You lazy fellow! How can you lie there, idling your time away, basking in the sun?"

SAMBO (who has heard a lecture on "Conservation of Force"): "No, sah. Notidlin'! Indusserus all do while, sah. Busy absorbin' da sun's rays. Berry hard at work, sah. Torage ob energy, like de coal."
Punch.

ALL ABOUT POLICEMEN.

WHAT is the difference between a policeman having a glass of ale on his beat and a publican's licence?—One is drinking on duty, and the other duty on drinking.

Why is a policeman like a bell-ringer?—Because he is a pealer.

When is he like an intoxicated Irishman?—When he is Pat-rolling.

Why is an experienced constable like an old backwoodsman?—Because he understands the art of foresting (of arresting).

When is he like a victorious volunteer?—When he's got his bull's-eyes.

What police officer is like a public-house ghost?—An inn-spectre.

When is a policeman like a solicitor?—When he charges a prisoner.

When is he like a chess-player?—When he takes a man up and moves another on to the next square.

Why is he like a pistol?—Because he makes a report when he goes off—duty.

Why are the Metropolitan Police like the River Thames?—Because they fill the London docks.

How is it that a policeman is seldom more than a month in the force before he obtains a watch?—Give it up. Don't know. Too personal.

Judy.

PARADOXICAL PLAYFULNESS.

TAILORS are the most playful paradoxes in the world; why, whenever you may want something new they will recommend you something that is much worn.

Money is proverbially said to be a great lever in all domestic and political economy; it is,

in fact, so great a leaver that many can never keep it.

Some men strike women before marriage, others do so afterwards.

Here is a real playful paradox: People in the remote ages used to burn their dead; people of the present period earn their living.

To kiss a young lady against her wish is considered by magistrates a "fine" offence; some young ladies, nevertheless, would call it a capital one.

It is one of the strangest paradoxes of the day that, however much ashamed a man may be of the fashion of his nose, yet does he always follow it.

Furthermore it is equally strange that ladies should be called "Mum," when they so seldom are so.

Here is a still more extraordinary paradox: While even the best of musicians will execute his music, a bad one will simply murder it.

Judy.

THE ELDEST MISS JONES says that to see some couples carrying on makes her very blood cuddle.

Judy.

A "BEAST"-LY WIND.—A "sow"-wester.
Fun.

WISE IN HER GENERATION.

SUNDAY SCHOOL VISITOR: "Never put off till to-morrow what you can do to-day. Do you know what that means?"

SHARP CHILD: "Yes, miss, always finish the pudding all up at supper, and don't save none for next day."

Fun.

A DEFINITION.

WHAT'S A DIARESIS?
Failure I fear is his
Meed who essays to say what;
But the nearest approach is
Contained in my coach's
Description—"A duplicate dot."

Fun.

A DEAD CERTAINTY.

FLOURISHING SPECULATOR: "My dear boy, why don't you let me do a little for you in Great Snagg Walpers? There's a fortune in 'em."

RUINED SPECULATOR: "I know there is. There's mine!"

Funny Folks.

THOSE BUSY BEES.

An absconding bankrupt named Bees has been committed for trial on a charge of "obtaining some money by false pretences." As if it were not in the nature of things for Bees to take any means to "obtain some m'oney."

Funny Folks.

A BOND OF FATE.

A NEW NOVEL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"A Winsome Wife," "So Fair Her Face," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XIII.

SOMETHING TO DO.

Ob, fear not in a world like this,
And thou shalt know e'er long—
Know how sublime a thing it is
To suffer and be strong.

THE RAGE FOR GOLDEN BROWN HAIR was at its height when Lilian Carmichael made her appeal to Mr. Pemberton, and he saw at once that hers was of an unusually beautiful texture and quality. He bought and sold almost everything, this odd, reserved man, and he had done a good deal in a quiet way for certain aristocratic customers of his in the way of providing the sunny-hued tresses so dear to the female heart.

Lilian's visit came just opportunely if she had but known it; an ancient lady, with more money than she knew what to do with, and a fancy that she looked about half her real age, wanted hair of that very shade, it bearing a faint resemblance to the colour of her own hair in her youthful days.

Mr. Pemberton did not actually promise in that first interview to buy the hair, but he said enough to make Lilian and Mrs. Jessup too understand that he would do so, and bade her call again the next day.

When Andrew told him who was waiting for him he knew that he should be detained some time, and probably this lady's time was of consequence; besides, he wanted to think over something that had come into his head about her; she had interested him more than he could express, and he had gathered from her agitated words that she was in distress.

He would ask her, find out more about who and what she was, and perhaps he might be able to help her to something that would put a little money in her pocket. He was thoroughly good-hearted, this eccentric, lonely man, and never missed an opportunity of doing good if he could do it unseen and unheard. His name but seldom appeared in charitable lists, and he was apt to be very brusque to all people who came to him with subscription lists and begging letters, but many a sorrowful woman and suffering man could tell of distress relieved, and pain assuaged through his timely and quiet help.

"He means it, my dear," Mrs. Jessup said, when her lodger came back and told her she was to call on Mr. Pemberton again. He is not the man to drag you all that way twice for nothing. But he never decides in a hurry. He's a distant relation of mine, and I used to see a good deal of him years ago. Don't be afraid to answer any questions he may ask you; it won't be out of curiosity that he will do it."

Somehow Lilian liked Mr. Pemberton. Though he was by no means suave in his manner at first, there was something in his face that was honest and good, and she did not feel the same nervousness in ringing at the door of the Garden House on the second day as she did on the first. Her husband had been curious to know where she was going, but she had put him off by telling him she thought she had a chance of a little work and she was going to see after it; it would have distressed him terribly had she told him plainly what she was going to do.

"So you have come," Mr. Pemberton said, as he entered the room into which Andrew had shown her, a different apartment this time, more gloomy, and bare of all modern furniture, but full of all sorts of valuable things, like all the rest of the house. "You have not altered your mind?"

"I could not, as I told you yesterday. I have no other means of—"

She paused with a choking in her throat, and he looked at her curiously for a moment and then rang the bell.

"Bring me a glass of port wine," he said to Andrew, who appeared almost instantly, "and a slice of bread; this lady is fatigued. And tell Bateson's man we shall want him directly."

Andrew went for the simple refreshment which Lilian could not find voice to refuse. She was just at that stage of agitation and weariness when to have spoken would have been to burst into hysterical tears, and Mr. Pemberton went on.

"You will be ready for me when you have had that glass of wine. Most people would have offered you cake. I know the value of a piece of plain bread with a glass of wine as a refresher and stimulant, and I suspect you want both. When people are in trouble they don't eat as they should and then they give way when they want to be bravest."

He made her eat the bread and drink the wine, and the colour came back to her face and the power of speech to her tongue, and she smiled and thanked him.

"Please don't think me nervously foolish," she said, "it is as you say, I have had a great deal of anxiety and it has told on me, I suppose. I am only too thankful to think that you will buy my wares."

She took off her hat as she spoke and shook down her hair till it fell about her in a golden shower.

"I can't fancy myself without it," she said, looking at herself in a great glass that was oppo-

sition to her, and which had reflected many a stately form in the days of Queen Anne. "Whatever shall I look like?"

"Like a lady," Mr. Pemberton replied. "I will take care of that. Are you ready for the sacrifice?"

"Quite."

"Then we will see about business at once. I shall have something else to say to you afterwards."

He rang the bell, and the individual he had spoken of as "Bateson's man" appeared at the door with a light wrapper over his arm.

"The lady is ready," Mr. Pemberton said; "you will be careful to cut the hair so as to suit the style of her face."

"Very good, sir."

Lilian understood at once that she was in the hands of a careful artist; indeed, had she known, the very name of "Bateson's" would have been sufficient guarantee that her hair would be properly cut. The man came from one of the first wig-makers in London, and knew exactly how to deprive a lady of her luxuriant hair and yet leave her presentable. It was a long process, but Lilian had the consolation of feeling that it was being artistically done and that she should not get up from her seat looking as if she had been shorn by a prison barber.

It was over at last, and she rose from her seat with a strangely light feeling about her head and a curious sensation of having parted with part of herself as she saw the long golden tresses lying on the table beside her.

"Will you look at yourself, madame?" said the man, handing her a small glass. "If there is anything you can suggest I shall be happy to show you what arrangement of short hair will suit your face best."

She was half afraid to glance at her altered appearance, but she need have had no fear. Instead of the crown of plaits and the thick wavy mass that had rested on her forehead there appeared a short mass of feathery, wavy hair, through which the light glinted, giving her a spirituelle look that accorded well with her present wan and delicate face.

"Well," Mr. Pemberton said, kindly, "what do you think of it? Are you hideously disfigured?"

"Oh, no, and I am very grateful," she added, in a low tone, so that the man should not hear her.

"It is a mutual accommodation, my dear," the bric-a-brac dealer replied. "Oh, good morning," as the wig maker's man took himself off with a bow. "Now, Mrs. Carmichael, put on your hat; if you have a few minutes to spare perhaps I can help you a little further. What can you do?"

The question was so abrupt that for a moment Lilian could not reply to it; it seemed to take her breath away.

"Very little, I am afraid," she said, when she found her tongue. "I thought I knew how to do a great many things till it was necessary to turn my talents to account, and now—"

She stopped with a sigh, the tears almost coming again as she thought of her fruitless efforts to get something to do.

"And now of course you can't find any way to utilise any of your accomplishments. I know. I have watched the struggle in many a case and it comes to misery and despair and starvation because the world is overstocked with willing hands and sad hearts like yours. Can you do anything beyond the ordinary accomplishments of fashionable womankind?"

"I can sew, I can make and mend, but there are so many who can do the same, and quicker than I can."

"Can you mend lace? I don't mean draw the holes together, many people do that very cleverly and call it lace mending, but I mean the work that makes the old fabric the same as the new one—real artist's work."

"My mother used to do it," Lilian said, her eyes brightening. "She taught me how to copy the pattern. I should like to try. I think I could earn some money at that if I could get it to do. But lace is valuable, and who would trust a stranger with it?"

"It is trusted to me sometimes," Mr. Pemberton said, with a queer smile. "See here."

He opened what looked like a door in the wall and brought out a discoloured bundle.

"Every thread of it worth ten times its weight in gold," he said, handling it with a tender care that showed how he appreciated its rarity. How would you set about mending that, for instance?"

He saw the bright look that had come into Lilian's eyes, and he said to himself "She'll do" as she turned over the costly rags, for they were little more, with appreciative fingers.

"I have never done any like this," she said, "but I should like to try."

"You shall try—that is, under certain conditions."

"What are they?"

"First and foremost, the work must be done here. I cannot let that go out of my house for an hour."

"Of course not. I should be afraid to take it."

"Can you leave that husband of yours for the necessary time?"

"To earn bread for him I would," Lilian replied, "not for anything else. Mrs. Jessup will do what he wants while I am away; she is very kind."

"She used to be, I know. Then, Mrs. Carmichael, get what tools you consider necessary for the work and come here to-morrow morning about ten. You shall have a room to work in. I won't answer for its being very lively, but it shall be clean, and if you succeed in showing me that you can mend that lace you won't be short of work for some time—I daresay for as long as you like to stick to it. I do various things in the way of trade, as you may imagine, but I can't do my own sewing."

He laughed and bade her good morning, pressing some money on her for what he called her tools, and she went home, forgetting all about her shorn head in the joy of the money she carried for her hair, and hopeful that there was a way opening at last for her to earn something towards a living for Adrian and herself.

He was not so shocked at her appearance as she had feared he would be, but the tears were in his eyes as he chided her for the sacrifice she had made, and he caught something of her own hopefulness when she talked to him about the new work she hoped to be found capable of doing.

She bought materials, and spent the rest of the day in practising the various lace stitches that she had learned from her mother, and she went to bed tolerably satisfied that she had not forgotten what she had once known, and built a happy castle in her dreams, wherein she had made enough money to take Adrian away from Whitechapel and have a little house in the country, where he was gaining strength rapidly, and where they were both forgetting the miserable past and beginning a fresh life of happiness and hope.

When she got to Garden House the next morning Mr. Pemberton was engaged, but Andrew showed her to a room over the front door, a tiny den, but quite large enough for her to sit in and work comfortably. The window was entirely covered with fine wire gauze; she could see out perfectly, but no one could see in.

Andrew brought her a very small piece of the lace. He was as respectful to her as if she had been a duchess, perhaps more so than he was to the aristocratic customers of his eccentric master.

"Will you please let the master see what you can do with this?" he said, "and if you require anything will you be kind enough to touch this bell?" and so speaking he vanished without another word.

CHAPTER XIV.

BETTER TIMES.

'Tis not in mortals to command success;
But we'll do more, Sempronius—we'll deserve it.

LILIAN took other materials for her work and began it in some fear and trembling. The bit of lace that Andrew had brought her had a pattern

unlike anything she had ever seen before, and there seemed to be stitches in it that nothing she had ever learned resembled. She had great patience and a liking for any work that was fine and required care, and she carefully spread what was whole of the fragment on her paper and made a copy of it. Then she fastened out the lace and began to insert the morsels that were wanting to complete the pattern.

She found that she could make a fair imitation of the stitches that were strange to her, and she set to work, growing really interested as the time went on.

Lace mending is very slow work, but she had made perceptible progress after a couple of hours, and she was so absorbed in her occupation that she was quite startled when a sound woke her from a reverie about the origin of the scrap she was working upon, and she looked up to see Mr. Pemberton standing beside her.

"Do you always work so industriously?" he asked.

"I hope so when there is any necessity," she said. "I got interested and forgot there was any outside world, I believe. I did not hear you come in, Mr. Pemberton."

"No. I have been here a minute at least. Are you succeeding in the work?"

"I hope so—I think so. I do not know how some of these stitches are produced, so I have had to imitate them."

"I should think that will do," Mr. Pemberton said, taking up what she had done and examining it critically. "But I must ask someone else before I finally decide. I am a pretty good judge, but there are better to be found, and in a multitude of counsellors there is safety, you know."

Lilian had taken some slight refreshment with her, not knowing what time she might be at the Garden House, but Mr. Pemberton insisted on her having a good dinner, which he sent to a neighbouring restaurant for, from which his own meals and Andrew's sometimes came. If he was a miser, as some people called him, in anything at all, it certainly was not in the matter of generous food, and Lilian found herself set down to such a meal as she had not tasted for some time. Good and nourishing food for Adrian she had always managed to provide so far, but she mostly made her dinner of a cup of tea and a piece of bread, thinking it sumptuous fare if she was able to add a thin slice of meat or a bit of fish when it was plentiful.

She was not at all nervous when she went away at night after having done sufficient of the lace for Mr. Pemberton to show a specimen.

"I shall make a purpose journey and take it to-night," he said. "If the owner of the lace is not satisfied she will be hard to please indeed."

"The owner. Does it not belong to you?"

"Yes and no. It is mine now, but it is sold if I can find anyone to put it in order. I tried one or two people and one large lace firm, but there were two reasons for my not employing either of them: the prices demanded I thought exorbitant, and no one would come here to do the work, the lace is too valuable to be trusted out of my hands, I cannot risk having it stolen or further damaged, so you see you will be of real service if your work will do."

Adrian Carmichael's wife little thought where her new employer would go after she left the Garden House, or that his destination was the house from which she had fled to aid and succour Kathleen Esmond's victim.

It was even so. The heiress had purchased many things of Mr. Pemberton, to whom she had been introduced by some of her friends. She affected a taste for the antique just now in accordance with the prevailing fashion, and was crowding her house with all sorts of old things.

The lace which looked like nothing so much as a heap of flimsy rags when she saw it first she declared she would wear at the next Drawing Room she went to if anyone could be found to repair it.

She was in town now, though everyone she almost was out of it, en route for some house she was going to visit. She had returned from her continental tour with all memory of Adrian Carmichael completely erased from her heart and head.

She remembered she had known such a person once, but he had outrun his means as so many other men did, and having done so had sunk into a well-deserved obscurity. Other victims had come and gone since his time, not quite so bad as he had been perhaps, but all too easily fooled for their own peace of mind, and Miss Esmond was beginning to think that it might be well if she led a life of country seclusion for a little while.

She received Mr. Pemberton with great cordiality. It was her role to appear interested and cordial to those she was pleased to consider her inferiors; and she made him as welcome as if he had been one of her ordinary guests.

"Have you come to tell me anything about the lace?" she asked. "Or to tempt me to any new extravagance?"

"My business is solely about the lace, Miss Esmond," he replied. "I think I have found someone to do the work that will satisfy even you."

"Even me. That sounds as if you thought me very exacting and hard to please. I assure you it is not so."

"I do not presume to think so, madame. What I meant to imply was that I thought I had found someone who would fulfil all the conditions you laid down. The lady will do the work at my house, her charges will be reasonable compared with those I laid before you the last time we spoke on the subject, and I think the work will be satisfactory."

"Dear me, it sounds as if you have found a paragon. Who is she may I ask?"

"No one you would know, most probably," Mr. Pemberton said, quietly. "A young person hailing from the east end whom I heard of accidentally."

"Brought up to the business?"

"I should imagine so from the finished style of her work. But you can judge of that for yourself. Here it is."

He produced the fragment of lace from his pocket-book and laid it on the table before Miss Esmond and Lady Hester, who was with her. Both ladies examined it attentively, and then the heiress looked up.

"Evidently a practised hand, as you say, Mr. Pemberton," she said. "The work is as near perfection as it can be. She has had the taste not to work on old lace with white thread. I have seen that done before now."

"I thought she had both taste and skill, Miss Esmond; I am glad you approve of what she has done. I will set her regularly to work tomorrow."

"Do you think she would do it here?"

"In your house?"

"Yes."

"No, I am sure she would not," Mr. Pemberton replied, decidedly.

"Why not?"

"For several reasons, the greatest of all being that her work could not go on properly here, there would be too many distractions. In my place she will have her own room, where the lace will be kept, and where it will be impossible for any of the small pieces to be lost. Another reason is that I know she would not be willing to come."

"She must be a singular young woman if she would refuse to come here," Kathleen Esmond said, looking round her luxurious room. "She would be well fed and housed with me."

"Doubtless, madam; but for all that she would say no if I asked her. She is modest and unassuming and knows her place, as they say of servant girls."

"Which means, in plain English, gives her self airs, I suppose. Servants who know their places are the most disagreeable set to deal

with; they are always vaunting their humility and their propriety, and don't work any better than their neighbours after all. Do as you please, of course, but I warn you I shall come and see this mysterious work-woman of yours some day."

"As you will, madam," Mr. Pemberton said, resolving that Kathleen should never see his lace-mender, or know, if he could help it, who it was that had been glad to take her money for hours and days of patient labour.

Lilian received a note the next morning bidding her prepare to take the whole of the lace-mending, and to make arrangements with Mrs. Jessup to attend to her husband while she was away, for the work was wanted as soon as possible, and she would have to keep at it till it was done.

A liberal sum was named as the price of the work, sufficient to keep them comfortably while the job lasted, and Mr. Pemberton pledged himself to find her work after it was done—if not in his own business, elsewhere.

And so work had come to her in her need, and she went day after day to the queer old house in Bloomsbury, wondering sometimes whether she could be the same Lilian Glendower who had been the admired of all Kathleen Esmond's guests, and who had looked at the West End world as her home till the bitter day when she had heard of the poverty that had fallen on the man she loved and had flung away all that a woman holds most dear to succour and aid him.

The terrible time when she thought that they must starve together seemed like a dream, now that she could see him provided with good meals and sufficient clothing and he chafed less at the knowledge that he was dependent on her earnings for bread, for the simple reason that he felt with every succeeding day he was gaining the strength without which he could do nothing either for her or himself.

Lilian, behind her wire screen, saw Mr. Pemberton's customers come and go. Many a face she had known during her brief stay in the house at Winchester Gate flitted before her as she sat upstairs, all unseen and unsuspected, and one day she saw enter the house the handsome form of Harold Carr Molyneux.

She remembered him well—his eager gaze at her when he was presented to her at his own request. The evening had been rendered memorable to her by the fact of Miss Esmond's exceeding spitefulness after the guests were gone.

She had no idea—how should she?—that the man she was watching would have given his life almost for a look at her sweet face, a touch of her soft hand. Had she been aware of the fact she would have pitied him perhaps for being so foolish, but she would have thought no more about him. She was Adrian's wife and he loved her. There was nothing else in all the wide world for her, save the husband whom she had helped to rescue from the grave.

All her thoughts were for Adrian. She planned for him morning, noon and night, and Mr. Pemberton cast about to make some way of raising the invalid to a little independence.

"It helps to keep him ill," he said to Lilian, one day, when they had been talking about Adrian and his slow convalescence. "If he were doing anything he would get better twice as fast."

"So he says himself," she replied, with a sigh, "but there is nothing he can get. Everyone seems to think him too delicate-looking to take anything yet, and there are so many in the field—every advertisement he answers seems to have hundreds of replies. He went to see about something in Oxford Street only yesterday, and there was such a crowd there they could not all get into the place, and he came back quite disheartened."

"Ah, I daresay. Tell him to come to me tomorrow; perhaps I can find him something he could manage."

"Oh! Mr. Pemberton, you are too good!" Lilian said, tears of gratitude springing to her eyes. "You are going to make something for him. You have Andrew."

"Andrew cannot do what I want, my dear. Andrew can lift and arrange, and he does not drive a bad bargain, for he is a connoisseur in his way, but he cannot write a neat hand and he would be very little use in what I want done. Bring Mr. Carmichael with you to-morrow, and I hope he will be able to do what I want."

CHAPTER XV.

MR. PEMBERTON'S NEW ASSISTANT.

My poverty, but not my will, consents—I pay thy poverty, and not thy will.

It was with a feeling of thankfulness that he could not express that Adrian Carmichael accompanied his wife to her employer's house the next day. He had never in the course of his whole existence done anything to earn money, and he had begun to feel in the last despairing months how hard it was to find anyone willing to give him employment.

There was a pang at his heart as he thought of seeing anyone who knew his story, as Lilian had told him Mr. Pemberton did. To come in contact with anyone who knew that he had nearly gone into his grave for the sake of a wicked woman was humiliation enough, and then there would be the chance of now and then seeing his old acquaintances of the Falcon and elsewhere.

Lilian combated all his objections, telling him of the complete seclusion in which she had been working all the time she had been at the Garden House, and how very particular Mr. Pemberton seemed to be about strangers seeing any part of his premises except the two or three rooms he kept for reception apartments.

"No one will see you, Adrian, unless you choose—I am pretty sure of that," she said, in answer to his objection on that score; "he has been most considerate for me."

"Ah, it's all very easy in your work, but he won't want me for that sort of thing," Adrian said. "Don't fancy I am ungrateful to him, my dear. I am more thankful than I can express, but it will come hard at first if he wants me in any part of his business where I have to come in contact with his customers."

He need have had no fear; Mr. Pemberton had no such thought. He greeted him very kindly, and asked him if he were able to do some writing for him.

"You look sadly weak and pale yet," he said, "but Mrs. Carmichael tells me that you are wishing for something to do."

"Indeed I am. I am a great deal stronger than I look. An illness like mine leaves its effects on the face for a long time. I am quite well now."

"There might be a difference of opinion on that subject," the master of the Garden House replied. "However, what I want you to do for me is not hard labour. Have you any knowledge on the subject of curiosities and so forth?"

"No knowledge, but a great deal of interest."

"The one will soon lead to the other," Mr. Pemberton said, marking the keen air of enjoyment with which Adrian Carmichael regarded the various articles of value and rarity scattered about the room.

"The fact is I do not keep my books as they should be kept—I don't mean my cash books, that is an accountant's affair and is regularly attended to—I mean the record of my stock, where I get such and such articles from, and whom they go to in the course of transfer. There is not a single thing here down to the veriest morsel of old china that ought not to be faithfully registered and its whereabouts known."

"I could do that, I think," Adrian said, his face brightening as Lilian had not seen it brighter for many a day. "I am not very strong, but—"

"Your bodily strength will not be taxed. I shall put Andrew at your service. He will do all the moving and lifting that is necessary, and he will help you in other ways as well. He is a bit of a judge in his way, too, and carries the

history of things in his head in a wonderful fashion."

"I don't know how to thank you, Mr. Pemberton," Adrian Carmichael said, his voice trembling with emotion. "I can only hope you will find me suitable. But this work—will it take me into the front of the house, where your customers come in, I mean?"

"It never shall, be sure of that, unless you wish it," was the answer, in a tone that showed Adrian that the request was fully understood, and then Mr. Pemberton took him to a large room where he and Andrew would carry on their operations all to themselves.

"Of course I cannot guarantee that you shall never see anyone at all," he said, "but I will do my best to save you from any pain in that way."

And he did. The experiment proved successful beyond his hopes, and Adrian Carmichael turned out to be the very person he wanted; he and Andrew between them classified and arranged the stock, and the old serving-man, for a wonder, took kindly to the new-comer and was content to work with him. At the end of a month Mr. Pemberton made his new assistants an offer. He proposed that they should leave Mrs. Jessup and come to live nearer to him. He could give them both constant employment, and he should like to have them at hand.

The sum he offered was not great, but it was riches to what they had come to fancy would do for them to live upon, and moreover he offered them a lodgings rent free—at any rate, for the present.

He had purchased the lease of an old house close to his own, of which there were still some years to run; and in the meantime he let it out in tenements, exercising such a strict surveillance over his tenants that very often some of the rooms were not occupied at all. He only laughed and said better empty rooms than disgraceful people in them, and just now the whole of the garret floor was vacant in consequence of his objection to drunken fights between the last occupant and his wife.

If Lilian liked to live there—and they were large rooms—she was quite welcome, and she accepted the offer in the spirit in which it was made, and presently took possession of three airy attics furnished with all sorts of incongruous things out of the stores of the Garden House. She was thankful for the change, for she was not very well able to walk from Whitechapel now, and she would be glad for Adrian to be nearer his work when she was laid by and not able to attend to his comforts.

The winter passed quietly away and the spring came, and another London season had commenced its gaities when a tiny baby was laid in her arms and she was pronounced to Adrian's great joy to be doing well.

During the winter there had been but few of Mr. Pemberton's customers in town, and she had somewhat lost her dread of being seen, and had proved herself useful in the front part of the house on several occasions when something that could not well be moved away from its place had wanted some delicate repair that only her fingers could accomplish.

The baby grew and thrived amidst the queer surroundings of Mr. Pemberton's stock, and spent many an hour there by his mother's side while Lilian was busy at work at her various repairs.

Kathleen Esmond's lace had come back again to be mended; she had worn it as she said she would to the first Drawing Room of the season and it had been admired to her heart's content. The Drawing Room had been a very crowded one, and in the crush of coming out somehow or other Miss Esmond's train had fallen down and been trodden on before she had time to rescue it. The result was a great tear in the lace and a visit of the heiress to the Garden House to have it repaired again.

It so happened that Lilian was in the front room that day—the room where Mr. Pemberton received all his ordinary customers—the room where he had received her on the day when Reginald Carr Molyneux had called and seen her



[A CRUEL PERSECUTION.]

there. It also happened that Adrian was not there. He had almost finished the catalogue and history of Mr. Pemberton's goods, but there were a few sheets that wanted arranging and some dates supplying, and he had requested permission to do it at home, the more particularly as he felt anything but well and would be glad of the quiet.

"You must get the young one taken care of then," his employer said, "for I want Mrs. Carmichael for some very delicate work to-day—some Medici point that looks as if the rats had been at it."

The Garden House was getting to be looked on as the orthodox place to get real old lace mended at, and Mr. Pemberton was not a little amused at this novel addition to his business.

"Some men have greatness thrust upon them," he said to Lilian, one day. "I undertook to restore the lace Miss Esmond bought of me, and thanks to your clever fingers, my dear, I am getting famous as a lace-mender. As long as I keep up the mystery about who does it I shall keep the business."

"Then keep it up by all means," she replied. "If it pays you I am only too glad to be the mystery for as long as you like."

If it paid him! She thought herself liberally remunerated, but she little dreamed how profitable her work was to her employer, nor how the fagot of the unseen lace-mender was getting abroad amongst the ladies who patronised his business.

It was easy for her to find someone to take care of the baby now and bring it to her now and then, for she lived so close by and she could afford to pay for the assistance she needed. So she left Adrian with all he wanted both for his work and himself and went to the Garden House to mend the Medici point, which was in a worse condition than even Miss Esmond's lace had been.

"Sit here for a little while, will you?" Mr. Pemberton said, when she went in. "Andrew has appropriated your own particular room for a

whole lot of fragile goods while he and the old lady have a turn out in the back apartments. You can slip through here if anyone comes, though it is so wet that I don't suppose we shall have any visitors."

Lilian nodded and sat down to her work; she had so often slipped through the door he indicated when customers were shown in, it was half hidden by tapestry, and anyone could vanish by it almost unnoticed.

Mr. Pemberton's customers were apt to say that he came upon them as if he had fallen from the clouds when they became suddenly aware of his presence without seeing how he entered the room.

Lilian had altered wonderfully since the old day at Winchester Gate. She was more beautiful, if that were possible; the face had grown thinner and less round than of yore, and the hair, which had been so luxuriant and had looked so massive in its heavy braids, fell about her neck and shoulders now in soft, feathery curls that gave an indescribable charm to her features and made her look wonderfully spirituelle and refined.

She would always be a graceful lady, no matter what her surroundings might be, and she looked like a disguised princess in her somewhat quaint and uncommon attire on this damp and drizzly morning.

Mr. Pemberton had given her all sorts of odds and ends in his various turnings out, and amongst the rest a piece of queer-looking stuff which looked like faded chintz, but which was really needlework, every bit of the pattern being worked by hand Heaven knows how many years or centuries ago. It was unsaleable, as many of his purchases were, and he told Lilian if she could use it to take it.

In the present day of aesthetic insanity it would have been eagerly sought after and have fetched its price, and Lilian anticipated the fashionable craze and transformed herself into something like a medieval princess by making a dress of it after a fashion of her own, exquisitely fitting and marvellously becoming.

A bronze belt confined it at the waist, and with her golden head bending over the pile of old lace her fingers were so busy with it that she looked as if she had stepped out of some old picture.

Suddenly she heard a carriage stop, and she sprang up and tried the door of communication with the back of the house. It was fastened on the other side, and with a little gesture of impatience she sat down again.

"Sit still, my dear," Mr. Pemberton said, as he came into the room. "I daresay it is no one particular."

"Miss Esmond," announced Andrew; and Lilian, unable to escape, turned a little on one side and bent her head still lower over her needle, hoping she should not be noticed.

So she and Kathleen Esmond were face to face once more! Oh, how her cheeks burned and her eyes flashed! And now she prayed that Adrian might not come in while the unwelcome visitor was there. The heiress was in her most genial mood.

"I have found you at home, Mr. Pemberton," she said, gaily. "I said you would surely be here this wet day. My poor lace has come to grief again. See here."

She held it up as she spoke and showed the rent.

"Some brute trod on it," she said, "but it will not be so difficult to mend as it was before. I should like it done by the same person."

"It shall be so, madam."

"Is this the person who did it?"

She had espied Lilian in her corner and came up to her.

"That is the lady, Miss Esmond."

The eyes of the two women met, and Miss Esmond recoiled with a look of savage disgust.

"This woman!" she said. "I should prefer my work being done by a person of respectable character, Mr. Pemberton, if you please."

(To be Continued.)



[AN INTERRUPTION.]

A WINSOME WOMAN.

A NOVELETTE.

(COMPLETE IN THIS NUMBER.)

CHAPTER I.

SOMEBODY IN LOVE.

"I don't think I ever shot so badly in my life," said Will Hartley. "My share of the bag is infinitesimal."

"You can't think of bright eyes and hit partridges," replied Sir Rowland Huson.

"Who is thinking of bright eyes?" demanded Will, pausing at a stile and resting his gun upon the ground. "And what eyes are there here for a fellow to think of?"

"Splendidly assumed," said Sir Rowland— "next to real innocence, the most perfect thing."

"I see what you are aiming at," returned Will, sitting down, "and I really wonder at you. Lucia Landor is not even a pretty woman—"

"Winsome though."

"That's a matter of taste. She is not my fancy."

"She is mine, Will, and so I tell you frankly, but I am not hers. It is quite a cross-purpose game."

Sir Rowland stood facing his friend, lighting his pipe and talking as calmly of a hopeless love as if it had never given him a pang, whereas it might be rankling bitterly in his heart and giving him many restless hours by day and night.

"Oh!" said Will, slowly, "you are a little spoons in that quarter?"

"Very much spoons," said the baronet, without a ruffle on his handsome face. "And I wish I were not."

The keeper had gone on ahead and was resting midway in the next field with the bag and a

pair of retrievers at his feet. Sir Rowland signed for him to go on, and re-shouldering the bag he sauntered on, followed speedily by the two sportsmen.

"Lucia is penniless, I know, Will," said the baronet, "and that may not make her more pleasing in your sight."

"Confound the tin," said Hartley, disgusted. "Haven't I enough for one, or two if I were a marrying man, which, thank goodness, I am not? And how you could think that I was spoons on anyone beats my comprehension. Ha, ha! Spoons on girl I have not known a week."

"My respected mother invited her to Batten Hall," said Sir Rowland, with an unwonted gravity in his face, "with the motherly idea of making a good match for her son."

"Is Lucia a good match?" asked Hartley.

"As a woman undoubtedly. She is of good family, well educated, undoubtedly clever and winsome."

"That's a favourite word of yours, that winsome, isn't it?"

"I can't call to mind that I ever applied it to any woman before."

"You are making up for lost time now at all events."

"Well, she is winsome, isn't she?"

"There is something taking about her," said Will Hartley, with an air of curt criticism, "but she won't set the county on fire."

"She doesn't want to do so. Lucia is not the woman to go in for general admiration."

"Then she is not a true woman."

"Is that your real opinion, Will?"

"Well, it is an opinion, not of mine alone—"

"But of some of the little fourpenny cynics whose books you are so fond of reading. Now, Will, confess you have great reverence for the sweater sex."

"I love my mother."

"Of course you do. Go on."

"And I have a great love for my sister."

"You would be a brute if you had not. She is one of the kindest-hearted girls going."

"Not winsome, eh?" said Will, sarcastically.

Sir Rowland's face flushed and there was a pained look in his face as he replied to his friend.

"You sister Ruth is more than winsome—she is wise."

"Perhaps she would not be very grateful for your opinion. Every woman would rather be pretty than wise."

"I did not say she was not pretty," said Sir Rowland.

"You implied it," returned Will, laughing; "and I can tell you—"

"And I can tell you that you are shuffling to get away from the original question. Have you not a great reverence for sweet woman?"

"I think I have answered it."

"As to a mother and sister, but what of the rest?"

"Oh," said Will, drily, "I have never thought about it, but I will by-and-bye, and you shall have my answer to-morrow."

"I have it to-day," Sir Rowland said. "You dare not deny your love for womankind."

"Dare not!"

"No; and if you did I would denounce you before my mother, Lucia, and your own people. I would so expose you that you should never hold up your head before them again."

"Do it," said Will, defiantly, "and I will tell them how sweet you are upon the winsome lady."

"For mercy's sake," cried Sir Rowland, pale with fright, "don't do that. I should have to bolt away from the Hall, and the shooting season just begun."

"A truce then," said Will, laughing, "we will spare each other."

"Agreed with you," said the baronet. "On my word, what a turn you gave me."

"I don't see why it should," returned Will; "you want Lucia to know that you love her, don't you?"

"No—no, not for worlds. She has never thought of me, never will think of me, and I

wouldn't have it mentioned for a mint of money."

"What an odd idea," said Will, as they turned into the avenue leading up to the Hall. "If I were spoons on a girl I should like her to know of it, so that reflection might bring her to the proper frame of mind which would enable her to perceive the many blessings and advantages of marrying me right away."

CHAPTER II.

AT BATTEN HALL.

WILL HARTLEY had a pet theory with regard to dressing for dinner. According to his views no man, single or married, ought to give more than twenty minutes to that duty. If he could not dress in that time he ought not to dress at all.

Hitherto his practice had always been in accordance with his preaching. Precisely twenty minutes before he was expected in the drawing-room he would saunter upstairs, change his attire with despatch, and put in an appearance in the very nick of time.

The night of the first of September proved, however, to be his first exception to the rule. He was fully five minutes late, and could give no reason for the delay. As there was a reason, and we happen to know it—the path of an author's duty is clear—that reason must be given.

Will went upstairs as usual punctual to the minute, but instead of going at once to work he sank into a chair and ruminated. He was thinking of that little talk he had with Sir Rowland Huson on his way home.

"So like him," he muttered, "getting spoons where no good can come of it. A winsome woman, indeed! Well, I don't deny that she is nice, but—Pshaw! Huson is an ass! I know my mother brought Ruth here to marry him, and Ruth I know would not say no to him. Why doesn't he fall in love with HER and relieve the anxiety of my maternal parent?"

"But he won't do that," he muttered, as he began to unlace his shooting boots, "not he! He will go on sticking to the wrong woman, spoiling—what? Not MY lovemaking, for I don't even think of it, but in a dull, old country house when the day's shooting is over one must have somebody to talk to, and he can't expect me to be satisfied with my mother and sister. On my word, it is very selfish of Huson—horribly selfish."

He ruminated on in this fashion until it suddenly occurred to him that he was wasting time, and looking at his watch he saw that he had just five minutes. With an angry growl at his folly in thinking about a woman at all, winsome or otherwise, he dashed into his dressing, performed a hurried toilet, and, as aforesaid, appeared in the drawing-room five minutes late, with a tie that was simply a disgrace to an English gentleman.

He was positively the last down. His mother and Lady Hartley, two prim dames of the good old buckram school, were seated on an ottoman by the fire, and opposite them Sir Rowland sat between Ruth and Lucia, making desperate love to the latter with a forlorn-hope expression of countenance.

Ruth was a blonde, with a face that would have done for a canvas Madonna, or for any emblematical figure where regular features and sweetness of expression are everything. Lucia was her very opposite, a brunette, with speaking eyes and a mouth made for smiling and kissing.

Will glanced sourly at the young folks and took a seat behind the elderly ladies.

"My dear boy," said Mr. Hartley, "it is so unusual for you to be late."

"Ties horribly starched," murmured Will, "and could not get one to my satisfaction."

"Your hair is certainly an abomination in the land," said Ruth from the opposite side.

"Is it?" said Will, softly. "I'm glad it is; I don't want that first Lucia to think that I trouble myself to dress for her."

Dinner being announced Sir Rowland led the way with Mrs. Hartley, and the two girls came next, and Will, awry in tie, mind and body, brought up the rear with Lady Huson. The fates and the customs of society seated him next to Lucia at the table.

"I hear you have been unfortunate to-day?" she says.

"Yes," replied Will; "birds very wild."

"Already?"

"Confounded wild—never knew anything like it."

"But Sir Rowland shot pretty well?"

"He had all the birds—rose under his nose, and he need not have bragged about it."

"He never said a word," said Lucia, warmly; "the keeper told Annetta, my maid, and Annetta told me. I really felt quite sorry for you, knowing how much gentlemen count upon shooting."

"I never count on it much, or on anything."

"Surely you have not abandoned the world and its wicked ways just yet?" said Lucia, with a merry glance at Will. "May I trouble you for the salt? I think the soup will be the better for a little more."

"A thousand pardons!" said Will, ashamed of his inattentiveness. "I'm all abroad to-day; I've caught cold, I think; a twinge in my shoulder has been coming and going for hours."

"Subject to rheumatism?" asked Lucia, gravely.

A slight frown appeared on Will's face.

"Not a bit," he said, "and don't look for it these ten years."

"It is a thing that comes to the young as well as the old," she said, sighing. "I often get a touch of it."

A strong suspicion that he was being laughed at laid hold of him, and it was strengthened when he saw Lucia and Sir Rowland exchange a merry glance. Having a man's horror of being made a butt of he resolved to become sulky and did not speak not another word until the entrées appeared.

"You do not go shooting to-morrow, I believe?" said Lucia, speaking as if there had been no pause in the conversation.

"No," he said.

"Sir Rowland did tell me that much, and he was proposing that we should ride to the Waterfall and lunch at the Royal George."

"Who is *we*?" asked Will, laconically.

"Ruth and I, and you and Sir Rowland," replied Lucia. "It will be good fun, won't it?"

"For me," said Will, with ill-restrained bitterness. "I'll go—I am one of the few men who can endure the society of my sister."

Lucia turned upon him a pair of wondering, dark eyes, innocent of any appreciation of the gall that was working within him.

"Surely you would not object to Ruth's going?" she said.

"No. Have I told you how glad I shall be to play cavalier to her?" replied Will. "I do not think there is any woman on earth to compare with Ruth."

"Oh!"

He had sent forth a cruel shaft and it struck home. Lucia and he did not exchange a dozen more words during dinner. A sense of being triumphant was upon him, but it was a miserable feeling, such as one feels after having beaten down and trampled upon a much weaker foe. Will felt that he had gone too far, but there was no way of returning that he could see.

"I wish that Huson may take up cudgels for her," he muttered, as he held open the door for the ladies retiring. "Won't I hammer him a little?"

But Sir Rowland did not appear to be inclined to enter the lists with anyone, and was in his most genial humour, beaming like a May moon with happiness real or feigned.

Will sat down with an increased dogged expression, which was entirely thrown away upon his companion, and having filled his glass was about to drink when the baronet checked him.

"Let us have a toast for once," he said—"the ladies."

"I have no objection to drink that toast in a general way," replied Will, loftily.

"Coupled with the name—"

"No names, if you please, Huson."

"No names, my dear fellow?"

"Under the circumstances, I think not."

"Very good," said the baronet, amiably. "By the way, you will go with us to-morrow—to the Waterfall?"

"I suppose so," replied Will; "Ruth will want a little looking after."

"Ah! so she will," said Sir Rowland, drily, and after that the conversation flagged and eventually died away, the decanter of claret passing from one to the other until it was emptied.

"Shall we have a fresh bottle?" said Sir Rowland, hospitably.

"No more for me, thanks," returned Will.

"Then let us join the ladies—unless you will have coffee here."

"Let us join the ladies by all means," said Will. "I have something particular to say to my mother."

He was going on in front as he spoke, and certain sounds behind him, not unlike stifled laughter, raised his ire and put his head very high in the air.

"Confounded rude of Huson," he growled, "to first make a guest as uncomfortable as he can and then laugh at him."

In the drawing-room he again fixed upon the elderly ladies and left Sir Rowland to do the amiable to the younger ones, and it was not a pleasing thing for him to see how merry they were without him.

Ruth, his sister, who might have taken some pity on him, was as bad as anybody, and Will began to harbour dark thoughts of giving her a bit of his mind before he went to rest.

It was strange that he did not think there was anything absurd in his getting angry about a woman for whom he was, sure he cared nothing. Lucia was all very well in her way, but he did not think many men would fall in love with her. He would just as soon have thought of falling in love with a woman he had never seen, at least that was his opinion.

Ruth sang and Lucia sang, and Sir Rowland helped with a powerful bass. Will, who had as good a tenor as any known amateur, was asked to contribute something towards the musical entertainment, but declined on the fictitious ground of being troubled with a sore throat.

"And a sore head—like the bear, I should think," said Lucia, sotto voice.

"My dear boy," said Mrs. Hartley, "I am sure you are unwell, you are so quiet."

A trio was going on at the other end of the room, and he was glaring at them as if they had done him a mortal injury, and vengeance was but a question of time and opportunity.

"Oh! I'm well enough," he said, indifferently.

"You are low in spirits," pursued the innocent old lady, "and want rousing. Why don't you go and make yourself agreeable to Miss Landor—she is a very winning girl?"

"Winsome and winning," muttered Will. "Oh, yes; she's a nice sort of creature—leading poor Huson on, so that he may come a heavier cropper when she lets him down. I hate a flirt."

"Won't you go over to them?" urged Mrs. Hartley; "it will cheer you up."

"Not to-night," he said, with a black brow and a tragical face.

"I think," continued Mrs. Hartley, "that if you were to put your feet into mustard and hot water just before you got into bed—"

But Will could not listen any longer. Hot mustard and water for a decided eruption of jealousy was a prescription enough toadden a man, so he pleaded a headache, bade Lady Huson and his mother good night, and went off to the smoking-room.

People with bad headaches do not as a rule indulge in the narcotic weed, but Will lit a big cheroot and smoked it fiercely, sending out great white clouds from his lips. He was well on with his second cigar when Sir Rowland appeared.

"Hallo!" said that cheerful gentleman, "so glad you're up. I hate smoking alone. Mrs. Hartley told me you had gone to bed?"

"I intended going," replied Will.

"But had a second thought and a better one. Won't you drink anything? Here is some brandy—and whisky and soda. Shall I brew for you?"

"Thanks."

"Do you know what I've made up my mind to do?" said Sir Rowland, as he loosened the soda water wire.

"Haven't the least idea," replied Will, with crushing indifference.

"To-morrow, I mean?"

"To-morrow or any other time. Can't conceive of anything you are likely to do."

"I am going to pop the question. What do you think of that?" asked Sir Rowland.

"I thought better of you," growled Will. "Always looked upon you as too much of a man to make a fool of yourself."

"Anyhow, Will, I mean to do it. Of course, I did not think it would find favour in your eyes—"

"What on earth have I to do with it?"

"Your hatred of matrimony and contempt for women have passed into a proverb."

"Indeed! I am glad to hear it."

"You'll drink to my good fortune I hope?"

"In a general way, or in reference to to-morrow?"

"Oh! to-morrow of course."

"I'm—if I do," said Will, suddenly loosing all control of himself, "and I think it about the coolest thing I ever heard of for you to ask me to do so. Good night."

"Here, drink your brandy and soda before you go."

"Don't want it," snarled Will, bolting out of the room, and as soon as he was gone Sir Rowland Huson threw himself into a capacious arm-chair and laughed until his eyes were dim with tears.

CHAPTER III.

AT THE WATERFALL.

The evening's ill temper seldom bears the morning's reflection, and Will Hartley rose from rather a restless couch feeling very much ashamed of the exhibition he had made of himself during the previous evening.

"What must Huson and the rest think of me?" he muttered, as he belaboured his head with two wiry, ivory-backed brushes. "There is really no excuse for a man being rude in a house where he is a guest—and it is all owing to that confound—Ahem! my winsome woman, Lucia Landor. The question is," he asked, appealing to the furniture of the room, apparently, "what is the matter with me? Is it love or the development of a latent hatred of an unoffending woman? There's nothing in her to distract anyone—and yet—she has speaking eyes, and her mouth, if a little large, is decidedly well shaped. It is a tempting mouth, and I expect it will be too much for Huson to deny. Heigho! What a nuisance life is; everything brushed the wrong way."

He got so far in his reflections when, looking out of the window, he saw Ruth and Lucia sauntering in the garden. Sir Rowland was not in sight.

"What a joke it will be," said Will, with a grin, "if I take possession of HER for the day and shut him out. It is only for a few hours, but there will be some satisfaction in it nevertheless. By Jove! I'll do it."

Elated with the idea, Will hastily drew on his coat and dashed downstairs into the garden. He was only just in time, for Sir Rowland, with a lily in his hand, was bearing down upon them from the direction of the conservatory.

"For her," thought Will. "She shan't have it."

"Good morning, Miss Landor—morning stroll," he said, raising his hat and putting on his best smile. "We are likely to have a charming day."

"Don't talk of the weather. I hate it," returned Lucia. "How is your headache?"

"Is that more interesting than the weather?"

"It at least has the merit of novelty."

He had already, with a brother's coolness, gone on ahead with Lucia, leaving Ruth behind. Sir Rowland coming up had no resource but to attach himself to that forlorn maiden, and as he carried the lily with the palpable object of giving it to somebody he was in gallantry bound to give it to her.

This he did with his usual genial grace, and Ruth's heightened colour attested the pleasure she felt in receiving the gift.

Will pertinaciously stuck to his companion, despite her occasional efforts to join the couple in the rear, and all breakfast-time he worried her with merriment too boisterous to be honest, and an amiability he did not exactly feel.

"We go in the dog-cart, I suppose?" he said.

"I believe so," she said.

"Huson drives, of course? Perhaps you would not mind sitting behind with me? Ruth cannot endure her back to the horses."

"I will sit anywhere to oblige Ruth," said Lucia.

"Then it's an engagement," said Will, eagerly, "you sit behind with me?"

"For Ruth's sake—yes."

"I suppose that—you would not sit there for mine?"

Will had to struggle with this sentence before he could fairly set it free. Lucia received it with perfect composure.

"If it would benefit you in any way?" she said, "relieve your headache—let us say—I would do it of course."

"There are other aches besides those of the head," hinted Will, but it fell upon unheeding or wilfully deaf ears.

Sir Rowland was very thoughtful and talked little, which Will charged to ravening jealousy, and the satisfaction he experienced was immense. Some of his suffering on the previous day was avenged. The baronet certainly was not himself, and as it turned out he was indisposed in his turn.

"Will," he said, as they entered the garden together to have just one cigarette before starting, "I wish you would drive the mare to-day?"

"Is she quiet?" asked Will, aghast at the prospect of his amiable plans being upset.

"As a sheep," said Sir Rowland. "Take the ribbons, there's a good fellow. I've got a curious pain here," he put his forefinger upon his left side, "and I may turn up queer."

Will could not refuse, but he had the privilege of quietly cursing his ill-luck, which he took full advantage of, until it suddenly occurred to him that Ruth might be pressed into his service.

He accordingly went upon a pilgrimage in search of her and found her in the drawing-room ready dressed for starting.

"Ruth," said he, "which way do you like to ride on a dog-cart—at the back, isn't it?"

"I'm not particularly fond of the back seat," Ruth replied, "but at a pinch I don't mind it."

"Lucia—Miss Landor abhors it."

"Does she? Then I will go behind."

"And you must tell her that you prefer it."

"Of course, that is the only civil thing to do."

"And you won't yield to her?"

"Not for the world."

"Done Huson again," thought Will, with a chuckle.

Lucia Landor, on coming out, was not a little surprised to find Ruth seated behind and Will doggedly perched on the driving seat.

Sir Rowland was casting a grave eye over the harness as men accustomed to drive good cattle always do before starting.

"No, Ruth," said Lucia, "this will not do—you cannot sit behind."

"I prefer it," replied Ruth.

"You see I made a mistake about the seat," said Will, turning round. "I mixed it up a little. Let me give you a hand."

Lucia frowned and looked doubtful, but she did as she was told and seated herself beside the triumphant Will, who unconsciously waved his whip in triumph.

"It is a glorious day for a drive," he said.

"The weather again," was all Lucia said.

Sir Rowland sprang nimbly up behind and sat in a position which enabled him to talk to Lucia and Ruth at will. He began with Lucia, and Will, who as soon as the groom let the mare go found that she wanted driving, began to feel that he was blessed with only a left-handed victory after all.

"This mare is short of work," he said, cutting into a real and pleasant speech from the baronet.

"I meant to have taken her out two days ago," replied Sir Rowland, "but thinking of the shooting put it out of my head. Keep your eye on her for the first mile or two and she will be all right."

"Keeping his eye" on the mare meant that he was to devote his whole time and attention to her—and really there was need of it. The mare that was as "quiet as a sheep" covered the ground with a very corky action, with her ears pricked and eyes roaming from side to side. She pulled to, and only wanted to get the bit between her teeth to make a bolt of it.

"We really ought to have had something quieter," said Will, irritably.

"Are you afraid?" inquired Lucia, innocently.

"Will afraid?" laughed Sir Rowland; "that's a good joke. He would drive Mazeppa's steed with a pack-thread and sing a song as he went."

"He really doesn't look as if he could sing now," said Lucia, and then they both laughed.

"Good fun for you," muttered Will, between his teeth; "but I will spoil your fun at the Waterfall."

He had a good pretext for silence and he indulged himself with it. Noticing that Ruth also said little—and no wonder, poor girl—he thought:

"It's a shame; it isn't decent manners for Huson to neglect her as he does."

It was twelve miles to the Waterfall, and the mare did it within the hour, but she was very heated when she pulled up at the pretty place of resort, over-looking a narrow river with a cascade, that gave the name to the place. On either side of the river wood grew to the water's edge, and it was all free for the lovers of rustic beauty to roam in.

"Just twelve," said Sir Rowland; "what time shall we lunch? Will two suit you? We can have a glass of sherry and a biscuit now."

"What are you going to do during the intervening two hours?" asked Will.

"Have a trot about the wood."

"All right. Will you see to the mare, as you understand her?"

"Very good."

When Sir Rowland came back from the stables he found that Will Hartley had already established himself as Lucia's escort, having taken possession of a light shawl she brought with her in case the evening should be chilly. No objection could possibly be made to such an arrangement, and off they went to the wood two and two, Will certainly walking at an unreasonable pace.

"Are we not going too fast for the others?" asked Lucia, as they got into the thicker parts of the wood, where the path wound about snake fashion.

"Oh, they are not far behind," replied Will, who in his heart was bent upon losing Sir Rowland and Ruth.

"But I do not even hear them."

"They may not be talking."

"That is not like Sir Rowland, who is always chatty and pleasant."

Will felt that this was a blow aimed at him, but he offered no reply, feeling that he deserved it. His conduct on the previous evening now appeared to him to be incomprehensible, unparable.

"If you would go a little slower," said Lucia, after awhile, "I think it would be pleasanter."

"You shall go any pace you please," replied Will, now assured that he had left the other

couple far behind, "and here—for the path divides into two—which will you go by?"

"Either."

"You must make your choice."

"Must is a very didactic word."

"Choose then, to oblige me. The right-hand one, I think, leads to the river."

"We will go by that; Sir Rowland will no doubt come by that one."

"You seem to be very anxious about Sir Rowland."

"If I come out with people I like to be agreeable."

"You think me the reverse?"

"I do not think you are always so agreeable as you might be."

"Oh!"

Again he was pulled up short by a sense of deserving the hardest knocks Lucia could possibly give him. Among his friends and acquaintances he was accounted an agreeable fellow. What had made him so very different during the past twenty-four hours? He was loth to confess that it was all owing to his being in love with a winsome woman.

The path they chose was like the other, of a sinuous nature, and it took them a long way round before they came to the river, but they arrived there at last and found themselves upon a sunny bank, commanding a peep at the Water-fall between some bushes at a hundred yards below by the bend.

The stream flowed placidly on, as if it loved the spot too well to hurry past, and not a boat caused a ripple on its surface. The wind was hushed, the sun warm, the air laden with the aroma of plants and flowers, and they were alone.

"How charming!" exclaimed Lucia, drawing a deep breath.

"It is so," he answered; "shall we rest here? There is no fear of damp."

"But the others?"

"They will find us anon. It is their own fault that they have lost us."

She sat down by the river and he stretched himself at her feet, so that he could, when he willed, look up into her speaking eyes. They were always pleasant to look upon, but they were doubly so that day.

Will Hartley, too, was worth a glance from a woman's eyes, for he had physical gifts passing the common lot of man. It does not fail to the share of all of us to be close on six feet in height, with good shoulders, a sinewy frame, and a handsome face. Will had all these, and Lucia saw and appreciated his gifts.

"I wonder now," he thought, as he looked at her downcast eyes, "if she cares even a little for me. If she does it would be a good joke to cut Huson out. He said she did not care for him, but that's a way some people have of boasting. Yes, it would be a good joke and something more."

Lucia plucked a blade of grass and cast it into the stream. Will plucked another and nibbled, but for a minute or more neither spoke.

"How silent you are!" he said, at last.

"I am afraid I have acquired that gift from you," she said.

"From me?"

"Have you forgotten last night when you made a dumb man of yourself at dinner?"

"I was in a horribly bad temper."

"A sad confession."

"I had had an unlucky day with the birds; I shot nothing."

"All the better for the birds. Those you missed have a little longer to live."

"I suppose they find life very pleasant," signed Will.

"Why should they not?" asked Lucia. "Life appears to me to be a very pleasant thing."

"You are fortunate. I wish I could say the same."

"What have you to make you unhappy?"

"I am not unhappy, but unsatisfied. I have a craving for something," he felt he was on the road now and getting along splendidly—"which will never be satisfied."

"It is foolish to sigh for the unattainable,"

said Lucia, taking up a whole handful of grass.

"Why not give up the idea?"

"I do not know that it is quite unattainable."

"Then why not seek it?"

"How?"

"With all your mind and heart, as becomes a man."

"Lucia," said Will, drawing nearer to her, "shall I tell you what I sigh for?"

She did not answer and her face was turned from him. It was not exactly encouraging, but he was not disheartened.

"I can only be refused," he said, "if I am so bold as to ask for the precious boon I crave. Will you try to love me?"

"Try?"

It was no louder than a soft sigh and but a single word, but it had volumes of meaning in it.

"Do you love me?"

"Shall I love a man who takes such pains to show me how indifferent I am to him?"

"You are not indifferent. I love you dearly—I do as I hope to live."

"How long have you discovered this secret?"

"My heart has told me so from the first moment we met, but I did not understand its language."

"Our hearts then, Will, must have been holding converse with each other."

He looked into her eyes, those sweet, winsome eyes, and reading his happy fate therein clasped her to his heart.

CHAPTER IV.

SO SORRY FOR SIR ROWLAND.

THEY lingered long on the bank, forgetful of all things but their present happiness. Will had so much to say, so much to ask pardon for, and Lucia had to listen and grant him absolution.

Then Sir Rowland had to be talked of. Will was quite grieved when he came to think of the baronet's pending disappointment, and Lucia when she heard of his intention to propose was terribly distressed.

"Are you sure, Will," she said, "that he meant to ask me to be his wife?"

"He told me he was spoons on you, and that he was going to propose to somebody to-day."

"Oh, how sorry I am!"

"If you think his sufferings will be too great—"

"Don't be a goose, Will! I know what you were going to say. If I am too sorry for him I had better consider myself free and accept him. How dull men are. They will not see that a woman never talks of her sorrow for the man she loves."

"And I am the dullest among men."

"If I said that you would be offended."

"I can never be offended with anything you do or say."

"Not if I entertain a life-long sorrow for Sir Rowland?"

"You are a very trying woman," said Will, "and if you insist upon talking that way I——"

"You really must not—somebody is coming."

"One—only one."

"You have had too many already."

"I'll not move from this spot without having one more."

"Tyrant!" said Lucia, as she lifted up her pretty mouth for him to kiss.

The somebody proved to be Sir Rowland, who presented the flushed appearance of a person who has been hurrying about in search of something or somebody.

"I say," he cried, "where have you people been knocking about?"

"Sitting by the river waiting for you," replied Will, promptly.

"Waiting for us? Do you know the time?—five minutes to three and the luncheon all spoiled—at least it would have been if it had not been a cold one."

"Where is Ruth?" asked Lucia.

"At the house, waiting with martyr-like resignation for you two stray-aways."

"My watch must have stopped; but why did you not seek us before?" said Will.

"Cool, in any case," replied Sir Rowland. "Why didn't you say it was a game of hide-and-seek you were going to play? I don't understand it at all."

"Oh! there is nothing in it," said Will, in an off-hand manner. "Anybody might be lost in such a wood as this."

"I don't know that," said the baronet, doubtfully; "but even now you don't seem to be in any great hurry."

"We are rather fatigued," replied Lucia.

"Well, I will just run on and re-assure Ruth, who is sure that something has happened to you."

"Poor fellow!" said Will, as Sir Rowland hurried off. "We won't tell him to-day."

"But suppose he should propose to me?" said Lucia, with a look of alarm.

"Don't give him a chance."

"I did not give you one—you made it."

"If you wished you might have thwarted it."

"But I had no idea of your fell purpose."

"None at all?"

"None. How should I know that such a bear as you have been could so soon put on the feathers of a cooing dove?"

"Lucia, have mercy upon me."

"I will if you will promise not to keep stopping by the way. It is dreadful to think how long we kept our inoffensive friends waiting for luncheon."

He only stopped once more, and a little after three o'clock they put in an appearance in the room set apart for them at the inn. Sir Rowland had already begun to carve, and Ruth had a plate of fowl before her.

"We had just given you up, Will," she said.

"I certainly thought you people were following and would find us out," replied Will. "Lucia—ahem!—Miss Landor, can I give you a little raised pie?"

"If you please, Will—Mr. Hartley."

Sir Rowland glanced quickly from one to the other, and pouring out a glass of wine drank it quickly.

"What infamous sherry," he growled.

"I was just thinking that it was truly fair," said Will, trifling with his glass, "that is, fair for an inn."

"A man's palate," said Ruth, "is subject, like his mind, to the emotions. Sir Rowland has been running all over the country in search of you, and is naturally a little put out."

"Not a bit," Sir Rowland insisted.

They finished luncheon, and the two men went out to see how the mare was getting on and to smoke a cigar. There was a visible restraint in both, and they had little to say to each other.

"Shall we have a row on the water?" said Sir Rowland, after they had inspected the stable and found the mare was well cared for.

"Don't know that I care about it," replied Will.

"Your sister wishes to go round to the back-water."

"Well, take her. Lucia—Miss Landor and I will have a look at the gardens here. They seem to be wonderfully pretty."

"For public gardens not bad, but as usual too much plaster statuary about."

"Uncommonly good in their way."

"Everything seems to please you. Yesterday you were grumbling at everything. So I suppose I must take Miss Hartley without you?"

"As I am sure Miss Landor would rather remain on terra firma I think you had better do so. It is so kind of you to be so attentive to Ruth. She appreciates a good cavalier."

"We both seem to be appreciated to-day," groaned Sir Rowland, and walked off.

"Poor fellow," sighed Will, "the shadow of defeat already rests upon him. I thought I should rejoice over my victory, but as far as he is concerned it brings me no joy. Poor Huson, it will be a terrible blow to him when he learns all."

CHAPTER V.

THE BLOW DEALT.

At five o'clock they left the Waterfall, and before six o'clock they were home, the mare showing even a better pace than she did going out, which may be traced to that love for the stable which distinguishes all horses.

Sir Rowland drove with Lucia by his side, and Will sat behind with Ruth in a perfect state of contentment. He had no reason to be jealous now, and his mind was mainly exercised as to how he was to tell the truth to his friend.

He did not talk to Ruth, and she had that pensive air which speaks of a sentimental line of thought, so that his silence perhaps was a boon to her. On reaching Batten Hall they dispersed, each to their separate rooms to dress for dinner.

Will was down punctually that night, before the time in fact, and Lucia soon followed, so that they had the drawing-room to themselves for a delicious five minutes before anybody else appeared.

Lady Huson was the next, and it was fortunate she was short-sighted, or she would have witnessed two people sitting very close together, forgetful of all the world until the rustle of her dress woke them up and made them jump apart as if they had been the victims of a violent galvanic shock.

"Rowland does not appear to be well," she said, "it is so rarely that he is out of spirits, but it seems to be that there is something wrong with him to-day."

"Nonsense, mother," said the gentleman referred to, coming in at that moment, "I am as right—well, as the popular ninepence. Lucia, I want to speak to you outside. I hope to be forgiven for this rudeness, but it is on very important business."

Lucia looked at Will, who was too much taken aback to respond to her glance. It seemed to him to be about the coolest thing he had ever heard. Asking a girl five minutes before dinner to come into the hall to listen to a proposal.

Lady Huson did not appear to see anything wrong in it. She simply said:

"Go, children, and get your talk over as soon as you can. Dinner will soon be served."

Lucia, in a helpless sort of way, took Sir Rowland's proffered arm and cast a reproachful look at Will as she was led away. He half rose from his seat, but sat down again in a maze of doubt as to what course to pursue.

Voices speaking earnestly and then laughingly in the hall did not reassure him, but Lucia was not long absent, and came back with a smiling face, resuming her seat by the side of Will.

"What's up?" he asked. "Proposed, of course?"

"Nothing of the sort," replied Lucia, "but it's a secret, and I'm not to tell you."

"You ought not to have a secret with another fellow, Lucia."

"Ruth is in it as well."

"She can have as many secrets as she pleases, but with you it is quite another thing."

"I can't tell you, Will. I would if I had a right to."

In a moment he felt disposed to quarrel with her, lovers are such touchy beings, but one glance at her honest face reassured him, and feeling ashamed of the prompting he became one of the most amiable of men, and during dinner was admirable company.

"I'll break it to Huson over our wine," he thought, "a man can bear a lot when he has some good claret in his veins."

As soon as he was left alone with the baronet he began to pave his way to dealing the dreadful blow, first talking of the lotteries in life and the lottery in love in particular.

"A man so seldom gets the girl he wants," he said, "that one cannot help calling marriage a lottery."

"I think I shall get the girl I have set my heart on," said Sir Rowland.

"Don't be too hopeful," urged Will, "better always be prepared for disappointment."

"But I am sure of it. Do you think I am

such a dunderhead as not to know when a girl loves me?"

"But do you mean to say that Lucia—"

"Lucia has nothing to do with it. I told you the other day that she did not care a fig for me."

"But you said you were in love with her, and lovers always have hope."

"I jested with you," said Sir Rowland, leaning back in his chair and holding up his wine to the light. "I like Lucia as a friend, but in another way I don't care that"—snapping his fingers—"for her. I assure you I don't."

"Then why on earth did you tell me you did?"

"Because I saw you were spoons on her, and I do like to see a fellow a bit jealous. What fun Ruth and I have had about it."

"I shall talk to Ruth in a way she won't like for leaguing herself against me."

"No, you won't," said Sir Rowland, "unless you want to get into trouble with me. Ruth is my property."

"WHAT?"

"Fact," said Sir Rowland, calmly. "We made it up between us to-day when you and Lucia were squaring matters by the river. Bless you, we knew where you were, and we forgot the time too. I had only just sent Ruth on alone when I came upon you and kicked up that awful row about your keeping luncheon waiting. Ha! ha!"

"It is all very well for you to laugh," said Will, "but here have I been thinking how sad it was you—"

"Yes, I know—madly in love with Lucia, et cetera. It's all right. Do you care to remain here tipping?"

"Not I."

"Then let us go like true lovers at once to the drawing-room. Ruth, I know, will expect me."

"And Lucia won't be sorry to see me. But Lucia, it was too bad."

"Thank me for it, nevertheless. If I had not stimulated you you would not have been engaged at this moment."

"I don't think I should."

"Then thank a fellow for doing you a good turn. We are both well set up with better halves—search the wide world round and you will not find two better women."

And this assertion was subsequently confirmed when a clergyman had riveted the fetters upon them, when Sir Rowland had settled down with Ruth and Will Hartley with one whom he had not yet ceased to call his "Winsome Woman."

OUR COLUMNS FOR THE CURIOUS.

TWELFTH DAY CUSTOM.—In the reign of King Henry the VII. the following was the manner of keeping the festival at court: As for Tweelfth Day the king must go crowned in his royal robes, kirtle, surcoat, his furred hood about his neck, his mantle with a long train, and his cutlars before him; his armills upon his arms, of gold set full of rich stones; and no temporal man to touch them, but the king himself; and the squire for the body must bring them to the king in a fair kerchief and the king must put them on himself; and he must have his sceptre in his right hand, and the ball with the cross in the left hand, and the crown upon his head. And he must offer that day gold, myrrh, and sense; then must the dean of the chapel send unto the archbishop of Canterbury by clerk or priest the king's offering that day; and then must the archbishop give the next benefit that falleth in his gift to the same messenger. And the king must change his mantle when he goeth to meat, and take off his hood and lay it about his neck and clasp it before with a great rich ouche; and this must be of the same color that he is offered in. And the queen in the same form

when she is crowned. The same day that he goeth crowned he ought to go to matins, to which array belongeth his kirtle, surcoat, tabard and his furred hood slynd over his head, and rolled about his neck; and on his head his cap of estate, and his sword before him. At even-song he must go in his kirtle and surmat, and hood laid about his shoulders, and clasp the tippet and hood together before his breast with a great rich ouche, and his hat of estate upon his head.

THE MANNER OF PRESENTING A NEW YEAR'S GIFT IN THE 17TH CENTURY.—By the Earl of Huntington to James I. "You must buy a purse of about Vs. price, and put therein XX pieces of new gold of XXs. a piece, and go to the presence chamber, where the court is, upon new yere's day, in the morning about 8 o'clocke, and deliver the purse and the gold up to my Lord Chamberlain, then you must go down to the Jewell-house for a ticket to receive XVIIIIs. VId. as a gift to your pains, and give VId. there to the boy for your ticket; then go to Sir William Veall's office and show your ticket and receive your XVIIIIs. VId. Then go to the Jewell-house again, and make a piece of plate of XXX ounces weight, and marke it, and then in the afternoon you may go and fetch it away, and then give the gentleman who delivers it you XLs. in gold, and give to the boy IIls. and to the porter VId."

PURCHASE OF MASSES.—While Cortes was absent on his expedition against Christoval de Oli, his death was reported by men who assumed the government at Mexico; they ordered ceremonies and masses for his soul, and paid for them with his effects. When he returned Juan de Caceres the rich bought all these acts of devotion for his own account.

INCOMPLETE SIGN OF THE CROSS.—In the original Solemn League and Covenant which is now in the British Museum there are abundance of marksmen who from their abhorrence of popery leave the cross unfinished and sign in the shape of a T.

A MORRIS DANCE IN JEWELLERY.—At the accession of Charles I. there belonged to the crown "One Salt of gouldie called the Morris Daunce." Its foot was garnished with six great sapphires, fifteen diamonds, thirty-seven rubies, and forty-two small pearls; upon the border, about the shank, twelve diamonds, eighteen rubies, and fifty-two pearls; and standing about that were five Morris dauncers and Taberers having amongst them thirteen small garnishing pearls and one ruby. The Lady holding the salt had upon her garment, from her foot to her face, fifteen pearls and eighteen rubies. Upon the foot of the same salt were four coarse rubies and four coarse diamonds; upon the border, about the middle of the salt, were four coarse diamonds, seven rubies, and eight pearls; and upon the top of the said salt four diamonds, four rubies, and three great pearls; the Lady had upon the tyre of her head ten rubies, twelve diamonds, and twenty-nine garnishing pearls. By a special warrant of Charles I. dated at Hampton Court, December 7, in the first year of his reign, 1625, a large quantity of gold plate and jewels of great value, which had long continued, as it were, in a continual descent with the crown of England, were transferred to the Duke of Buckingham, and the Earl of Holland, Ambassadors Extraordinary to the United Provinces, who were thereby authorized to transport and dispose of them "beyond the seas," in such manner as the king had previously directed these noblemen in private. The splendid gold salt called the Morris Daunce, above described, jewelled with nine great sapphires, six great pearls, one hundred and fifty-nine small pearls, ninety-nine rubies, and fifty-one diamonds, and weighing one hundred and fifty one ounces and a half and half a quarter, was thus disposed of among the other precious heir-looms of the crown specified in the king's warrant.

EDWARD THE BLACK PRINCE.—Shaw gives a fac-simile from a picture in St. Stephen's Chapel, Westminster, in which the prince is clad in gilt armour, thus contradicting the popular opinion that he was called the Black Prince from the colour of his armour. Stothard says, "The

effigie is of copper gilt." In the British Museum is an illumination of Edward III. granting to his son the Duchy of Aquitaine, in which both figures are represented in silver armour with gilt joints. The first mention of the term Black Prince occurs, in a Parliamentary paper in the second year of Richard II.

A CELESTIAL SPECULUM.—The Speculum which belonged to Dr. Dee was asserted by him to have been given to him by the angels Gabriel and Raphael. It passed into the possession of the Earl of Peterborough, thence to Lady Betty Germaine, who gave it to the Duke of Argyle, whose son presented it to Horace Walpole. It was sold in 1842 at the dispersion of the curiosities at Strawberry Hill.

THE STARS AND STRIPES.—It was resolved on June 14, 1777, by the American Congress that the United States flag should have thirteen stripes, alternately red and white, which represented the thirteen original States of the Union, together with thirteen white stars on a blue ground. General Washington's escutcheon contained three bars and three stars, and like the American stars those of the General had only five points instead of six. A new star is now added for every new state, but the stripes remain the same.

ABBEY LANDS.—At the dissolution of the monasteries the abbey lands were divided among five noble families, if the rhyme may be relied on:

Hopton, Horner, Smyth, Knocknaile,
and Thynne,
When Abbots went out they all came
in.

CHAMPION OF ENGLAND.—This person's office was to ride up Westminster Hall on a coronation day and challenge anyone who disputed the right of succession. The office was established by William the Conqueror, and was given to Marmion and his male descendants with the manor of Scrooby. De Ludlow received the office and manor through the female line, and in the reign of Richard II. Sir John Dymoke succeeded through the female line also. Since then the office has continued in the Dymoke family.

ROYAL ARMS OF ENGLAND.—The three lions heralded were the cognizance of William the Conqueror; the lion rampant in the second quarter is from the arms of Scotland; and the harp in the third corner represents Ireland. The lion supporter is in honour of England, and the unicorn in honour of Scotland. These two supporters were introduced by James I. William I. had only two lions passant guardant; the third was introduced by Henry II. The lion rampant first appeared on Scotch seals in the reign of Alexander II. (1214-1249). The harp was assigned to Ireland in the time of Henry VII.; before that time the arms of Ireland were three crowns. The unicorn was not a supporter of the royal arms of Scotland before the reign of Mary Stuart.

BULL-BAITING IN KENDAL.—On the 5th of November especially bull-baiting took place, and the butchers rarely ventured to slaughter a bull unless it had been publicly baited. If any one did so he had to pay the customary penalty of hanging a sign-board out with "bull beef" on it, or burning candles or a lighted lantern over it and keeping the lights burning so long as any unbaited beef remained unsold. This practice continued until 1790, when it lapsed on the suppression of bull-baiting.

CURIOS BRIDAL REGULATION.—Brydalles the Nomberes Secundo die februario, 1575. Item it is orderyd and constituyt by the Alderman and Burgesses, with the full advise and assente aforesayd, that no pson or psons of what estate or callings so ever he, she, or they be off, whiche either be nowe dwellings or wch hearefter shalbe dwellings or residencies within this Borouge or Liberties hearoff, shall, after the foresayd sevynth daye of februarij next comynge, provide, prepaire, or make or cause or suffer to be provided, preparyed, or made at or within his, hers, or their howse or howses, or at or in any other howse or place within this Borouge or Liberties hearoff beinge. Any brydall dynner or weddys dynner off or ffor any pson or

psonnes nowe or hereafter beinge and dwelinge within this Borouge or Liberties hearoff and marryinge and weddys as is aforesayd in the Sames, above the nomber of twenty meassess (a meass was four persons) of Towne Folks in all as is aforesaid. Upon Payne to fforfeite and lesse to the use off the Chamber of this Borouge for everye sucha faulfe XXs.

LONDON IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.—The extent and increase of London during the reign of Queen Elizabeth caused the greatest alarm to the Government; yet in comparison with the present extent and progress of London how idle at a first glance seems the fear; still when we consider the sanitary condition of London at that time and the imperfect state of the roads throughout England we cannot wonder at the dread, particularly as plague and famine were frequent visitors to Queen Elizabeth's London citizens. In 1579 the alarm respecting the increase of London was so great that an inquisition was ordered to be taken of the number of foreigners in London, when it appeared that the number had increased threefold in twelve years. In 1567, the number of strangers in London was, Scots 40, French 428, Spaniards and Portuguese 45, Italians 140, Dutch 2,030, Burgundians 44, Danes 2, Liégeois 1, in all 2,730; in 1579, the number was 8,190. This increase produced a remonstrance from the Lord Mayor and aldermen against the number of new buildings and habitants within the city and suburbs of London, in consequence of which her Majesty issued a proclamation forbidding any new building of a house or tenement within three miles from the gate of the city, where no former house could be remembered to have stood, and likewise not to suffer more than one family to inhabit any house. The Lord Mayor was empowered to commit offenders against this proclamation, or to hold them to bail.

KILKENNY CATS.—The legend runs that two cats fought so ferociously in a sawpit that when the battle was over only the tail of each was left. This is an allegory of the municipalities of Kilkenny and Irishtown, who contended so stoutly about boundaries and rights to the end of the seventeenth century that they mutually impoverished each other—ate up each other, leaving only a tail behind.

ROESKILDE CATHEDRAL.—A traveller in Copenhagen of thirty years ago says: "It would not be easy for anyone to be aught else than solemnised in the cathedral of Roeskilde, with the many memorials of death and the vanity of earthly greatness before one's eyes. It has long been used as the burial place of the kings and royal personages of Denmark. Behind the choir are some magnificent monuments to former departed princes; the later deceased are buried in a chapel to one side, but the dust of Denmark's monarchs is laid aside in greater pomp than in any other land. On looking through the gate into the chapel I refer to, one sees a multitude of gorgeous coffins or rather sarcophagi ranged alongside one another, blazing with golden ornaments, and the tombs of marble elsewhere in the cathedral are very splendid. Not merely the present dynasty, which has sat on the throne 400 years, but members of much older dynasties have been put here to sleep. The mortal remains are preserved in such splendour and are so openly exposed to the gaze of the world that I should think the feeling would be a desire if possible not to be the last."

A ROYAL EXCAVATOR.—In 1850 the king of Denmark caused a tumulus to be opened near Scöborg, not far from the royal castle of Fredericksborg, where he had a tent set up, and where, with a portion of his suite, he spent many days and nights personally excavating and exploring, handling the shovel and pickaxe with his royal hands, digging and hammering with might and main, until the lords of the household were getting tired of the service.

BUDGE ROW.—Budge is lambskin with the wool dressed outwards, worn on the edge of capes, bachelors' hoods and so on, and Budge Row is so called because it was occupied chiefly by budge makers.

PURITAN USE FOR BELLS.—In the year 1650 Oliver Cromwell caused the bells of the first

church erected in Cork—said to have been founded by Saint Finbar, so called from his grey locks—to be melted and converted into cannon.

WOOLLEN MANUFACTURES IN ENGLAND.—The following is a translation of the "Letter of Protection" granted by Edward III. to John Kemp, a manufacturer from Flanders:

"AD. 1331, 5 Edw. III.

"On behalf of John Kempe, of Flanders, cloth weaver, concerning the exercise of his craft.

"The king to all bailiffs, &c., to whom it may concern, greeting. Know ye that whereas John Kempe of Flanders, weaver of woollen cloths, hath come to dwell within our kingdom of England for the purpose of practising his craft there, and of instructing and informing such as might desire to learn it of him, and hath brought with him certain men and servants, and apprentices to the said trade, we have taken the same John, and his aforesaid men, servants and apprentices, and all his goods and chattels whatsoever, under our protection, &c. We promise to cause similar letters of protection to be issued to other men of the same craft, and to dyers and fullers, who wish to come from parts beyond the seas to dwell within the same our kingdom for the aforesaid object. In witness whereof, &c., these letters are to hold good during the king's pleasure. Witness the king at Lincoln, the 28th day of July."

A CURIOUS REGULATION.—Two centuries ago Newcastle apprentices had to be protected by a special clause in their indentures from the excessive use of fish by their masters, the latter being compelled not to use it more than three days per week.

GENERAL GARFIELD,

THE LATE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

AFTER eleven weeks of suffering borne with many fortitude, amidst the sincere grief, the reverent compassion, the admiring love of many millions, both of his fellow-citizens in the great English Republic of America, and of our kindred English nation in the United Kingdom—indeed, of all civilised nations in Europe and throughout the world—James Abram Garfield has succumbed to the fatal bullet of the assassin.

As we published in No. 953 of the "LONDON READER" a biographical sketch of the late President we refer our readers to the facts therein set forth, and continue our narrative by an allusion to the causes which are said to have led to the dreadful crime so universally deplored.

General Garfield's election last November to the Presidency by the suffrages of 213 of the 369 electoral delegates, representing twenty of the thirty-eight States of the Union, might be regarded merely as a victory of the Republican over the Democratic party. But since his accession to the powers of his great office, in March of this year, he proved his intention to care more for uprightness and purity of administration than for party interests and resisted the importunities of venal intriguers and place-hunters. It seems to be this conduct which brought upon him the malignant enmity of such persons as the assassin of July 2. The fact was that a notorious and scandalous division, upon these very grounds, had taken place among the Republican party men, in consequence of the President's attitude of firm opposition to the corrupt use of official patronage. It seems that the "bosses" or managers of the party have claimed in each State where they gained a victory the privilege of disposing of the "spoils," which mean, in the State of New York, salaries to the amount of a million and a half of dollars in the Customs' Department alone. A practice, not recognised by the Constitution, has allowed the Senators of the victorious party in each State to fill all the Government offices, small and great, with their own personal adherents. Now, Mr. Conkling, the Republican Senator for New

York State, found his nomination to these official appointments resisted in the Senate and President Garfield refused to endorse them, upon which Mr. Conkling resigned his seat in the Senate, but stood again for re-election, supported by the Democratic party of New York State, in opposition to the President. The Vice-President, General Chester Arthur, was put forward as a rival to the President by this malcontent section of the Republican party. They call themselves "the Stalwarts," affecting to renounce President Garfield as a trimmer. One of the base and venal hangers-on of this faction was Charles Jules Guiteau, forty years of age, a native of Illinois, residing at Chicago, and an attorney by profession, but of French Canadian lineage. He had long taken a busy part in the caucuses and canvassings of the "Republican" party, which is the stronger party in the Western States, and he had since been trying to get for himself the appointment of United States Consul at Marseilles. For this purpose he had latterly been staying at Washington, soliciting the prominent members of that party in Congress to support his request. As they would not assist him he longed for a change of Government and he therefore resolved to kill President Garfield, according to his own confession, in order that General Arthur should become President, by the rule of the United States Constitution, as Vice-President Andrew Johnson, in 1865, became President on the death of Abraham Lincoln. This appears to have been the actual situation of affairs in which the idea of the crime originated in Guiteau's mind, but it is quite unnecessary to say that nobody has dreamed of imputing to the Vice-President, or to any other leading American politician, either of the Republicans or of the Democratic party, the slightest wish to procure an advantage by the death of President Garfield. It is considered certain that the assassination was the act of Guiteau alone and his language had been so preposterous as to make some people think he had gone mad.

We may here append an account of the manner in which the crime was perpetrated. It was half-past nine on Saturday morning, July 2. President Garfield came to the station of the Baltimore and Potomac Railway, about to start for Long Branch, New York, a favourite seaside watering place, where he was to spend a fortnight's holiday with his wife. He was accompanied by Mr. Blaine, the Secretary of State. Their carriage was dismissed at the door of the railway station, and they entered the waiting-room. As the President's carriage drove away, another drove up, and a man with a pale face jumped out, told the driver to wait, and followed the President and Mr. Blaine into the room. This man was the assassin, Charles Guiteau. The President and Mr. Blaine had advanced some little distance into the room when Guiteau sprang forward and shot the President from behind. Mr. Blaine, on the impulse of the moment, fell back a little, while the President, without a word, staggered forward and turned half round to face his assailant. Guiteau then advanced two steps in a crouching position, deliberately pointed his pistol at the President, and fired another shot into his body. Mr. Garfield fell forward on the floor, and Mr. Blaine, after making a start after the assassin, dropped on his knees beside Mr. Garfield and tried to raise him. The assassin turned after the second shot and ran towards the door. His carriage, with the door open, was waiting for him to enter. When driven back he started for the other door, intending to run around the corner of the building and enter his carriage that way; but next moment he was pounced upon by half a dozen men and secured. Mr. Blaine called out to have the doors closed, and they were at once barred by the officials. The President was then examined. He lay as he had fallen forward on his face, apparently dead. Assistance was sent for, and he was removed to the Executive Mansion, commonly called "the White House." The President soon recovered consciousness, and ordered a telegraphic message to be sent to his wife, who was staying at Long

Branch. He appeared quite composed, and chatted with Mr. Blaine, wondering what could have been the motive for this attempt upon his life. The calm cheerfulness which the President has shown has astonished all who have come into the sick-room. From the first Mr. Garfield understood the serious nature of his wound and ordered the doctors to hide nothing from him. When told that there was little hope of saving him, he remarked, "God's will be done. I am ready to die."

It was hoped that the removal of the illustrious patient, safely effected September 6, from Washington to Long Branch, a salubrious seaside resort on the coast of New Jersey, would have secured his recovery, and as time went on there was increasing hope of that result. The wound itself was healing, but the circulation of the blood was fatally disturbed, and it is probable that an internal abscess had formed. On Monday night, at half-past ten, on the 19th of September, came the sad termination, more suddenly than any of the physicians could have expected. A few minutes before his death the only words spoken by the President were that he had a severe pain in his heart. It is supposed by the surgeons that death was caused by a clot of blood forming in that organ. The body of the late President was removed to Washington, there to lie in state in the Rotunda of the Capitol, after which it was sent to Cleveland, in Ohio, and interred in the Lake View Cemetery on Monday, the 26th ult., in the presence of an enormous multitude of spectators.

Physically, General Garfield is described as having been of the full stature of manhood. Six feet in height, with broad shoulders and a massive frame, he was well fitted to stand in the gate before the enemies of his country. Student, soldier, economist, politician, and finally Ruler of the great Republic founded and maintained by our "kin beyond sea," his was a life of which any nation might be proud. It has been sacrificed in the service of just and pure administration, and great as is the loss the Union has suffered, it will not have been too great if by it should be inaugurated a reformed and purified administration of civil affairs.

GENERAL ARTHUR, THE NEW PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

MR. CHESTER A. ARTHUR, who by the lamented death of General Garfield becomes the acting President of the United States until the close of the Presidential term on March 4, 1885, is a native of New York State, having been born at Albany, the capital of the State, in 1831. He was educated at Union College, Schenectady, where he graduated in due course. He subsequently entered the Albany Law School, a branch of the College, and, after studying law for a short period, was admitted to the bar at an early age. He commenced business life by becoming a partner with Mr. E. D. Culver, a well-known lawyer in New York, and obtained considerable legal celebrity by his professional connection with the Lemmon Stone case. During the War of Secession he took an active part on the side of the Federals, and in the course of its progress was Quartermaster-General of the State of New York. Upon the conclusion of the war he again resumed practice, forming a law partnership with Mr. Ransom, Mr. Phillips, the District Attorney of New York, afterwards being added to the firm; and is now head of the firm of Messrs. Arthur, Phillips, Knevals, and Ransom. Appointed Collector of the Port of New York by President Grant in November, 1872, in succession to Thomas Murphy, he held the office until July, 1878, when he was removed by President Hayes on the ground that he stood in the way of the success of the reforms of the Civil Service. In politics he has always taken a leading part in the movements of the Republican Party, and his choice for the Republican nomination for Vice-President was made as a concession to the

section of that party of which Mr. Conkling is the leader. Under the management of Messrs. Conkling and Cameron the political machine known as the caucus system had been brought almost to perfection, and these two leaders could dictate the choice of delegates in a considerable majority of the districts. They, together with Senator Logan, made the campaign for the re-nomination of General Grant for a third term, and nearly succeeded in forcing it through. At the Convention, Mr. Arthur, who was a warm personal friend of Senator Conkling's, received the nomination for Vice-President, and the fact that he was the opponent of the Civil Service reforms inaugurated by General Garfield caused at first great anxiety in the public mind as to the probable course he would pursue should he be elevated to the Presidential chair; but this anxiety has now to some extent abated, and, according to the latest advices, his dignified bearing since the President's condition became so grave has received general commendation. His determination is, it is said, to govern wisely, not permitting any faction of the Republican Party to rule him.

Some curious packages passed through Paris the other day. They were little white wood boxes with tin lids pierced with air-holes. They were full of *Cyprus* bees on their way to North America, via Brindisi, Calais, and Liverpool.

FARNBOROUGH HALL, the new home of the Empress Eugénie, stands in grounds of 260 acres, well timbered, and with splendid gardens. The estate was bought for her for £50,000, although it is said that the mansion alone could not have been built for much less than £20,000. Alterations are being made which were originally estimated to cost £17,000, but it is probable that nearly three times that sum will be expended. The property formerly belonged to Mr. Longman, who had made it very beautiful.

A WRITER in the "Quarterly Review" says that it is possible now for a French manufacturer to come into the English market, buy raw wool, take it home and dye and weave it, and send it back here at a lower price than that at which a similar article can be produced by the English manufacturer.

NEWGATE prison is about to disappear, after an existence of more than six centuries and a half. In the earliest years of the reign of Henry III., it appears in history as the place of captivity for men of high degree. Sir Richard Whittington, father of the great lord mayor, ordered it to be rebuilt in his will. Destroyed in the great fire it rose from its ashes a shame to the humanity of the eighteenth century. The present gloomy building, in front of which so many persons have suffered the highest penalty of the law, has no historic value. It is only twenty-four years of age, can hardly be called an ornament, and has attached to it the most inconvenient offices and halls for the transaction of the principal criminal business of the country that could be erected by the ingenuity of man.

The degree of "M.P." is now conferred by a Transatlantic University. It does not, however, refer to Parliamentary dignity, but signifies "Master of Penmanship."

DROWNING men have hitherto had little better than straws to catch at. Thanks to the ingenuity and enterprise of a noted firm of umbrella makers, persons in such moments of danger are henceforth likely to find ready to their hands a life-saving apparatus of undoubted strength, substance and efficiency. It was indeed a "happy" thought which first suggested the combination of a "life buoy" with an article of such intrinsic utility as an umbrella. The inseparable companion of an Englishman, whether on land or water, in his hours of pleasure no less than those of toil, and an indispensable part of his travelling impedimenta, the umbrella is so much a part of the modern Britisher's bag and baggage that it may safely be assumed where he is there will his umbrella be also. With the new umbrella opened anyone may keep afloat for hours, as it is impossible to submerge the new invention.

October 15, 1881.



[A FANCIED WRONG.]

GREY AND SCARLET.

A SHORT STORY.

(COMPLETE IN THIS NUMBER.)

It was a whim of hers.
Grey and scarlet.

For three or four months now I expected to see nothing else.

Once it had been pure white, "white samite, mystic, wonderful;" once it had been black and gold, again it had been blue.

Each time I used to think she could look so lovely in nothing else—until she wore the next colour that struck her fancy.

I noticed that she generally came out in something new about the time that all the women in her set had adopted all the colours that suited her so marvellously and made her look so odd and picturesque.

I used to laugh in my sleeve sometimes to see a dainty blonde wearing amber and jet and look suddenly old and dowdy; or a hideous dowager blossom out in pale violet, and seem like a dilapidated old crocus that had forgotten spring until the autumn had come, and then surprisingly made its appearance.

As for Vivia, she looked lovely in everything. There was not a shade, or tint, or colour,

but, when she had put it on, seemed as if it had been manufactured for her particular edification.

She came into the room now in soft, clinging, shimmering, grey silk, with knots of scarlet shining vividly and mysteriously here and there.

The pale, statuesque face looked a trifle colder and more indifferent than usual; the great black eyes drooped languidly; the ripe, red mouth was a little scornful.

She sat down in a low chair before the grate and stared into the fire with those black, bewilderment eyes of hers.

"Joan, I am going home to-morrow," she said, suddenly.

"Going home!" I echoed, dropping my book, startled.

"Yes; I am tired of it all. So silly, so frivolous, so monotonous! Day after day, the same old wearisome story—the same ancient, worn-out emotions, dressed up in the most modern style, which only serves to make them the more pitiable! The same false smiles and shallow lies that anyone could fathom—the burlesques of all that is good and true and beautiful. I hate it!"

I looked at her. It was no new thing for her to make such remarks—at least, for the last year.

Before that she had been bright and sparkling and winsome—the merriest, sweetest girl I had

ever seen; but she had returned from abroad this way—cold and indifferent and bitter. What had worked the change?

But however she might be it made no difference to the world. It went mad about her, and the more scornful she was the madder it became.

"If I were not rich how long would it last me?" she said, contemptuously.

"You forget, dear, you would still have your beauty," I made reply.

"Beauty?" she exclaimed; and then her face grew so stern and white I actually dared not say another word.

I wondered and conjectured in vain. She never spoke of her three years abroad—at least, of anyone she had ever met there. She was hardly a girl to be confidential; and although I was her "nearest and dearest" I knew scarcely more of her heart than the veriest stranger.

Once, indeed, in looking over some of my music I had seen her stop suddenly, as if an unseen hand had stayed her, and she had stood a moment, looking down blankly at a sheet, and then abruptly had gone from the room. I went wonderingly to the music-stand, but all I saw was a German song, with the refrain:

Tender and true,
Tender and true!

—pretty and sweet and sad mayhap, but still only a song.

And then I wondered more than ever.

Of late I noticed she had been more than usually capricious and restless, constantly changing from one thing to another, as if goaded on by memories that had awakened to torture her. She had been petulant and tyrannical and rebellious until I think anyone else than I would have grown angry.

But she never railed against me, it was the world in the abstract.

I tried to think how long this mood had been upon her, and then all at once I remembered it had begun the very day she first donned the grey and scarlet livery.

I made up my mind then and there that I would ask her to take off the opinous garb and substitute green or orange, or pink, anything to exorcise the evil spirit.

But she broke out again:

"It has become unendurable, Joan. Not you, dear; don't look solemn. You are the only person in the world I can live with longer than a week, if that is any comfort to you. But there is no use denying it; I am miserable and unhappy, and I suppose I always will be. I deserve it all. I brought it upon myself. I don't complain. Only I must have something new."

A brilliant dash of colour had crept into each cheek and her hands were twisted nervously together.

"Vivia, dear," I said, thinking it best not to respond to her dawning confidence, "I cannot let you go until after the party. I really cannot, however much you may desire it. Your dress is ordered, the guests are invited, and the whole affair would be an utter failure without you. You would not break my heart by making my party a hollow mockery!"

"Would it grieve you very much to have me go, Joan?" looking at me wistfully.

"It really would, Vivia," I replied, solemnly. "Then I will stay," she said, meekly.

At my smile she arose and came over to my chair, and, although never demonstrative, she leaned down now and kissed me. Then she knelt on the cushion at my feet, and leaning across my knee she looked at me with such strange, sad eyes.

"Dear Joan, let me tell you—" she began.

But before she could utter another word the door swung open and Parker's sonorous tones announced:

"Mrs. Leighton and Miss Pauline Leigh-ton."

And before the sound of his voice had died away Vivia had slipped silently from the room.

The next afternoon I was reading listlessly in the great room that was part drawing-room and part boudoir, and where we always assembled in our informal moods, and we were an informal house. Vivia had gone to drive with Mrs. Laurence, and although I found "Italian Journeys" very fascinating Vivia's troubles held me more fascinated still.

What? Why? When? I revolved endlessly in my mind. What should change her so? Why had her happiness eluded her and slipped by? When had it come to her? When had it left her embittered?

I was so absorbed in my reverie that I did not perceive I was not alone until two merry, dark eyes glanced over the back of my chair, two hands held my own captive, and a gay voice exclaimed, laughing:

"Dreaming as usual, Aunt Joan! Will you never overcome this peccacious habit?"

"Percy, you bad boy, when did you return?" I said, rising, my book falling unheeded to the floor; for this Percy Thorne, my husband's nephew, was a great favourite of mine.

"I came back last night, and, aunt, here is my particular friend, Norman Thorson, of whom I have written you so much."

His companion had stood back in the shadow, and I had not perceived him until that moment—this tall, fair, handsome man who looked like a Viking.

"A friend of Percy's is always welcome, but more particularly this particular friend," I said, with a smile. And as the stranger bowed over my outstretched hand and the purple-dark eyes met mine for a moment, I thought: "Hers is one of the kings of the earth, who must only wish to have."

As the thought flashed through me my eyes fell mechanically on the firm, white hand that held my own, and I noticed a peculiar ring on it—an odd, antique jewel, that was an opalescent grey, with a vivid streak of scarlet through it; and I wondered what it was, as one does wonder of such things, hardly conscious that it has a place in the mind, for I had never seen anything like it before, though my husband had quite a large collection of curious rings. Perhaps Egyptian, I thought. Halbert said his store of Egyptian relics was very scant, as yet. And then I forgot all about it.

Percy began to talk in his eager, boyish way about the changes that had taken place in his absence; how glad he was to return; and yet how he hated to give up the old Bohemian life that had such "infinite variety."

Norman had actually almost accepted a chair in that musty German university when I pounced upon him and coaxed him to come home with me."

"How very dreadful!" I said, smiling across at the grave, silent man, who yet seemed to hold this careless, rattling boy in a tender esteem.

I looked at him again, noting the calm, white brow, the grave, perfect lips, the deep, masterful eyes, and wondered at the power that made itself speak through his very silence. But there was a shadow in the eyes, a sadness in the smile, a touch of pathos every now and then in the voice that aroused all the sympathy and curiosity in my nature; and some women, you know, are capable of a good deal of both.

I heard Vivia pass through the hall just then, but I knew she would be down as soon as she had changed her carriage-dress, and went on with my conjectures.

This man had a story. What was it? Was it a love story? Could any woman be wild enough to reject such a love as that soul could lavish?

Then he spoke.

"Mrs. Cartthers, are all the English so warm and cordial as this boy? He takes my Northern heart by storm. He carries me whither he will. He bends me and sways me and makes me his slave."

Percy's face lit up brilliantly.

"Norman, dear old man," he said, "it is I

who am the slave—a miserable, abject slave; and you ride over my prostrate body. A proud, triumphant slave, who kisses the foot upon his neck. Aunt Joan, I have resigned myself to eternal celibacy, since I cannot marry this solemn professor."

We were laughing at his earnestness when the door swung open and Vivia crossed the threshold. Some soft, gauzy, grey fabric floating about her like a cloud; a cluster of carnations, red and fragrant, at her throat and in her dark hair. Out of the cloud-like drapery, her pale face and great, shadowy eyes shone like a star. The soft, scarlet lips were smiling as she drifted toward me. She had never been more beautiful.

"Vivia, this is Percy Thorne, my graceless nephew. Miss Vergne, Professor Thorson."

She had given Percy one of her swift, sweet smiles, but when I spoke his friend's name her face slowly froze. She half started, and turned such a white face to him that I was frightened, and all the smiling grace and tender womanliness went from her bearing. She bowed to him frigidly and turned away.

"Vivia! Vivia!" he said, in a low voice, that made me thrill, his eyes filled with passion.

"You forget yourself," she said, icily; and he sank back in his chair, his face growing white and worn, his eyes stormy with pain. But Vivia was chatting to Percy lightly and gaily—only with that strange look in her eyes that I could not understand.

"You must stay to dinner," I said, by-and-by, "you and your friend. Halbert is going out of town to-morrow for a week, and would be disappointed if he did not see you."

I rang for lights now, and by this time Vivia was at the piano playing all sorts of fantastic tunes at Percy's suggestion. Then I heard them singing an Italian duet together; a Swiss chanson followed, then some snatches of English opera, and as her sweet, clear voice floated down the room I saw the shadow deepen in Norman Thorson's eyes.

A moment after she arose and Percy called out:

"Norman, come and sing that little song you sang that night we were lost in the Alps."

The professor glanced at me.

"Are we not taking possession of your house in a most unwarrantable manner, madame?" he said.

"Not in the least," I said. "Pray sing."

"As you will," he said, gravely, and went over to the piano.

I had never heard a finer voice, and then the song attracted me, a plaintive, German ballad of love and loss that was infinitely sweet and sad.

Where had I heard it? Ah, yes! I remember now; it was the same bit of music that had aroused Vivia's emotion a while ago.

The sorrowful refrain,

Tender and true,
Tender and true,

floated forebodingly on the air.

I glanced at Vivia—could it be? Her proud eyes were filled with tears, and the red, impetuous lips were trembling. I was filled with wonder. In some way these two people's lives had run together discordantly, and unless some special providence interfered were likely to run that way to the end of the chapter.

As he finished the song and rose I glanced at Vivia again; her face was calm and impassive. Norman Thorson glanced at her too.

"Do you remember?" he whispered, in German.

She glanced at him half scornfully.

"I remember nothing," she said, slowly and distinctly.

I could not bear to look at him. Surely Vivia was mad to throw aside this man's love, for love her passionately he did I was positive. And love like this is not vouchsafed to a woman more than once or twice in a lifetime.

Halbert came in directly and dinner was announced soon after. I often think of that dinner now. I had never heard so brilliant a conversationalist as that Viking of the North. His cool, polished wit was like a sabre; his dazzling cynicisms would have blinded me, but that behind it all I recognised the wide-souled, generous man.

Vivia aroused herself and talked as in her indolence she seldom allowed herself. She was tender and caustic, in a breath, bitter and sweet together, and witching and radiant, as only girls like her know how to be.

It comes back to me like a dream often. Their brilliant conversation, those two at dagger's points, Halbert's quiet monologues, Percy's racy talk, my own platitudes, with the gleam and glitter of silver and crystal and the rich glow of the flowers. But most of all I see the proud beauty of the girl and the eyes that were so often on her face, eager, pleading, and the black orbs that met the blue with "level fronting eyelids" brilliant and freezing.

And when Norman and Percy said good night Percy had a vivid carnation in his keeping, and Norman only a faint bow to remember.

The days went on. I did not see Norman Thorson again. Vivia was more restless, but as reticent as ever. She had not referred to him in any way except on that night, when as we stood alone she tore the scarlet flowers from her hair and throat and put her foot on them.

"To think he should have found me wearing those colours!" she said, bitterly.

Yet she continued to wear the colours nevertheless—grey and scarlet.

"It was a trivial fancy of mine, a girl's whim," she said, one day, as she stood before a mirror adjusting her dainty hat, "this wearing one colour, or combination of colours, for a certain length of time. But it saved me lots of trouble; all I had to do was to send a note and my reception, or carriage, or walking dress was put together without any study or exertion on my part. Of course it is silly and trifling—but women are always unreasoning and frivolous."

Yet she was not all that. She had studied deeper than most women and was an admirable scholar and even well up in the classics. She was generous and warm-hearted and winsome; often and often her monthly income clothed and fed and made happy some poor family, and it was no uncommon thing for a party or a conversation to be put aside that she might sit up with some sick child or helpless old woman.

She was a gracious, warm-hearted girl, but she had freaks and whims that I used to think might vanish beneath the sweet, strong magic of a great love; and she was capable of a great love—my Vivia.

The night of the party came at last, much to my relief, for I had an idea that it would be fraught with events, and the last few days had worn on me as well as on Vivia. She had actually grown thin and pale, and was feverishly brilliant and sad by turns.

At nine o'clock my deft Fanchon put the last touches to my toilette, and I went down, feeling peacefully that black satin and point were just the things for a plain woman like myself; opals and diamonds and tea-roses are happy aids to a woman on her middle-aged road to content.

The rooms were banked with flowers, fountains plashed and music floated from unseen musicians, and as I looked around with the complacency of a hostess who feels that there is nothing left to be done Vivia swept toward me.

A creature born of perfume and light and colour. Her dress was a marvel of Parisian art, and combined her colours in a way that Percy would have styled "delicious."

Pearly velvet, like a silver cloud, rare laces sweeping around her elegant form, a diamond star in her cloudy hair, another at her throat; and in the delicate, pearl-kidded hand clusters of vivid scarlet blossoms, and a knot of them pinned on one shoulder. She was perfectly colourless; but her lips were red and

sweet, and her eyes brilliant. She was absolutely faultless.

"Joan," she said, "I am awfully nervous to-night; I shall see ghosts—I know I shall."

"Indeed, you will not," I returned. "I shall give orders to Parker to admit no supernatural guests without cards of admission. You silly girl, you have been too dissipated these last weeks, and this is the reaction." I saw her shiver, and a bright flame crept into her cheeks. "Come with me, ma chère, and rest a little," I said, drawing her into my own little, rose-and-gold boudoir that opened off the library and into the conservatory. The lights were turned low in the rose-tinted globes, and a tiny, perfumed fountain plashed faintly in its lily-bordered basin.

"Sit here, dear, until the guests arrive. Let us pray they will be an hour yet," I said.

I insisted upon her lying down among the cushions of a divan, and softly smoothed the rested brow, until the poor child actually fell asleep.

How lovely she was! The colour had faded from her face again, and the long dusky lashes lay against the velvet cheek. The lips were red and peaceful as a child's, and she slumbered with all the soft abandon of a child worn out with play at day's close.

A movement of the velvet hangings attracted me, and I looked up to encounter Norman Thorson's eyes. I put my finger on my lips and he smiled faintly, taking one step forward to look at the lovely picture. Some magnetic influence disturbed her, and he stepped back into the conservatory.

"Dear Vivia," I whispered, "wake up; I hear the carriages, and you have slept more than half an hour."

She arose directly.

"I wish it was to-morrow morning," she said, wearily.

But she had never been more brilliant than on that night. Society went madder than ever over her. She was a flame that they could not touch; a snow blossom that froze them; a mist that faded before their eyes. She was everything—beautiful, dazzling, and unattainable.

I did not see Norman Thorson again until supper time. He apologised in his graceful way for being found in the "forbidden rooms of a sleeping beauty's palace."

"Percy insisted upon my coming with him," he said, "at that hour, as he had some treasures in his rooms which he wished to exhibit to me; and he will have no more time, as I go home to-morrow." And not pausing at any gesture of surprise he continued, hurriedly: "Percy said he knew I should find you in the conservatory, and I mistook the door. Is Miss Vergne ill?"

"Only tired with a winter of gaiety," I replied; "and grown restless and sad, as girls will who have moods. I remember Vivian when she had no moods but one of serene sweetness."

"Ah, yes! Was she not wonderful then?" he said, eagerly.

Did he hold the keys of her change?

"What changed her?" I asked, carelessly, playing with my fan, and looking at it as interestedly as if I had never seen it before. "Do you know, Herr Professor?"

"Ah, no! madame; she changed in an hour. I would give ten years of my life to know why."

With what passion he spoke! And yet his voice was calm and low.

The soft rustle of a woman's dress near me made me lift my eyes.

"Joan, dear," said Vivian, coming up, "I have promised Colonel Robinson that you will show him your century-plant," and she led me away with the faintest inclination of her head to Norman Thorson.

The young people were all dancing in the hall, or flirting in dim corners. The old people were in the card-rooms; and the library and conservatory were quite deserted.

"Colonel Robinson said he would wait in the library, but he is not here. Oh, Joan, come to the fountain; I am so tired."

She sank down on a chair—her face was quite ghastly.

I sat a moment watching her. These last weeks there were violet shadows under her eyes, and the little hand she dabbed so restlessly in the fountain was quite transparent.

"Professor Thorson is going home to-morrow, Vivian," I said, as carelessly as I could; "did you know?"

How is one ever to learn how a girl will act? Without a word or look she dropped forward among the lilies, one hand trailing heavily in the water. I lifted her up without a word and dashed the cool water in her face. In a moment she looked up with haggard, lovely eyes, but she did not speak.

"Vivian," I said, "I insist upon you unravelling this mystery. I shall not wait another moment. I have been patient long enough!"

She let her head fall on my shoulder wearily.

"You have been a loyal friend, dear; I will tell you. I met Norman Thorson abroad. I need not dwell on the story of our acquaintance; but after a few months we were betrothed. That night—how can I ever forget it? We were at Paris, our whole party, and we had lingered till sunset in the parlour that was sacred to us two; and some way all the rest had strayed away, some to their rooms, and some to the balconies; and we were alone." She paused a moment. "He asked me to be his wife, and I said yes—I loved him so dearly," with a faint sigh. The colour was creeping back into her cheeks, quivering, flaming. Because she spoke so simply I knew how deeply she felt, my poor Vivian.

"I went away at last to my room. I was so happy I could not go down to them all. I could only sit perfectly still and think of the great happiness that had come to me. Norman said he would be in the parlour at ten—all the rest would be at the opera then; so I went down. Joan, do you know how you can remember every little thing at a time like that? I had on a grey dress, with a bunch of cardinal flowers that Norman had gathered for me in the afternoon in my belt. I went downstairs and along the great, dim hall to the little parlour and opened the door noiselessly. Norman Thorson was there with the most beautiful woman I had ever seen. A woman with violet eyes and golden hair. A woman dressed in deep mourning. His arms were about her, and his face was uplifted to hers."

She stopped with such a look of utter misery in her dear face that I was inexpressibly touched and shocked.

"Don't say another word, dear; I was cruel to ask you," I said.

But she smiled faintly.

"I am glad to tell, Joan; I saw Norman Thorson kiss her once, twice, on her beautiful lips. I heard him say: 'My Liebling, I thought I should never see you again. And you have suffered so, little Gretchen; and I was not there to comfort you.' And she answered: 'What could I do but fly to you? Your love is all I have to comfort me!' And she put her fair arms up about his throat and then I crept out of the room, stunned and wretched; and the next day, before dawn, uncle and I were miles away."

"I folded up Norman Thorson's ring—a strange, antique ring, that would delight Albert's heart, Joan, and gave it in charge of a servant for him. That is all. I thought I would forget after a while, but it was stronger than my strength. How dare he come here?" with sudden passion. "Why does he leave his Hilda to trouble us?"

"Hilda!" I exclaimed, with a start of blank astonishment and understanding. "Why, Vivian, it must have been Norman Thorson's sister. Did you not know her name was Hilda?"

She stood up blindly and put out her hands; but before I could speak again there was a rustle near us, and Percy and Professor Thorson came toward us with an exquisitely beautiful woman. A tall, graceful woman, dressed in white from head to foot, with diamonds glittering in the shimmer of white satin and frosty

lace; with smiling, violet eyes, and wonderful golden hair.

I went forward, saying:

"My dear baroness, I am so charmed to welcome you."

This was Percy's secret and mine—his love for the young, widowed sister of his dearest friend; her recent, unexpected arrival in the city; and our acquaintance, of which Vivian had known nothing.

Before I could present Vivian to her Norman Thorson drew her gently to where Vivian stood, with the dusk-tremulous colour in her cheeks and the eager passion and storm in her eyes.

"Miss Vivian, will you not welcome my sister to your glorious land?"

She put one hand out uncertainly, all her bright colour fading, and again fell forward, fainting this time entirely away—my strong, self-sustained Vivian!

Professor Thorson caught her, however, giving me a look of passionate pleading.

"She has not been well for days," I said, turning to the sister, who stood pale and frightened, and Percy, who looked stupid, as men always do in such cases.

"Take the baroness into the music-room, Percy, and we will follow you as soon as Vivian recovers. This is nothing at all; she will be better in a moment," I said.

"Is it not very strange?" I heard the beautiful widow ask of Percy, as they went away. "It almost seemed as if she saw a ghost, she looked so white and horrified. Do I look like a ghost, Percy? The head of Medusa, perhaps?" with a little ripple of mirth, and an upward glance into the adoring eyes bent on her.

We chafed the inert little hands and fanned the fair face. Professor Thorson's face was even whiter than the one that lay against his shoulder, perfect in its death-like pallor, with the long, dark lashes and the sad, sweet mouth.

"My love," I heard him whisper, under his breath once; and then she opened her eyes.

"Norman!" she said, faintly; and he bent his proud head and kissed the sweet lips that were perfectly passive now.

And I thought at this that I had better go to the music-room.

At the very beginning of the season there was a brilliant double wedding. My Vivian and Professor Thorson; Percy Thorne and Hilda, Baroness Von Brandenburg.

Two things I have noticed with quiet amusement: Hilda and Vivian are the dearest of friends and Vivian wears a quaint old ring—a mysterious, grey opal, with sparks of fire in it. It was the one I noticed on Norman Thorson's hand.

And the last time I saw Vivian she wore a black satin walking-dress, with a sun-flower in her belt.

"I am so glad grey and scarlet are not fashionable now," she said. "It brings back all the old time, when I saw Norman kiss his own sister, who had just come from the death-bed of the baron. Joan!"

And looking at the happy face that is more beautiful than ever, I say:

"They are, indeed, my Vivian; and their stories do not always have such pleasant endings as yours."

It is estimated that about 1,000,000 acres of land have gone out of cultivation in this country during the last ten years.

FARMERS are requested to note that the Irish Revolutionary Party in America has been collecting Colorado beetles, which are intended for exportation to England, where they are to be let loose for the purpose of preying upon English crops.

EMBROIDERED GLOVES.—Edward Vere, the seventeenth Earl of Oxford, is recorded to have been the first that brought into England embroidered gloves and perfumes, and presenting the Queen with a pair of the former, she was so pleased with them as to be drawn with them in one of her portraits.

GEMS OF THOUGHT.

MERKNESS and patience are characteristic virtues in a woman.

The gentlest spirits, when provoked, are usually the most firm.

KEEP thyself good, pure, kind, and affectionate. Make thyself all simplicity.

It is a great mistake to imagine that piety is not entirely consistent with good nature and good manners.

BANTERING always leads to unpleasantness, and a free talker is never without enemies.

NATURE is a pattern maid-of-all-work, and does best when least meddled with.

THE wasp attacks the ripest fruit first, so will slander attempt to wound the honestest fame.

TRANQUILL pleasures last the longest. We are not fitted to bear long the burden of great joys.

ENVY increases in exact proportion with fame. The man that makes a character makes enemies. A radiant genius calls forth swarms of peevish, biting insects, just as the sunshine awakens a world of flies.

STATISTICS.

CENSUS OF INDIA.—What is to be the ultimate population of India? A census just completed gives the total at nearly 253,000,000—an increase on the last census of nearly 13,000,000. There appears to be an excess of women over men of over 5,000,000.

The report on the census just published by the United States Government derives special interest from the fact that the 19th of this month will be the centenary of the capture of Yorktown, which assured the independence of the United States. Since 1781 the population has grown to nearly 57,000,000, consisting of 43,404,876 white natives, 6,577,150 black and coloured persons, and 6,677,350 foreigners. To this total must be added 65,000 Indians paying tribute, the protected tribes, and 106,000 Chinese. In 1870 the proportion of foreigners to natives was 16 per cent., but during the last 10 years the increase of the native population has been greater than the increase of immigrants; and, with its 57,000,000 inhabitants, the United States Parliament is only composed of 76 senators in the Upper House, and 293 representatives in the Lower House.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

EYE CUP CAKES.—One quart of milk, four eggs, a little salt, and two large tablespoonfuls of rye meal thickened with flour to a thin batter. Fill the cups half full.

DORCHESTER PUDDING.—Two large handfuls of bread-crumbs soaked in one quart of boiling milk; add while hot a quarter pound of butter, salt and spice. Beat three eggs very light, add with two cups of sugar and a pound of currants washed and dried, also grated peel of an orange. Bake in a quick oven half an hour; serve with cold sauce.

TOMATOES STUFFED WITH CORN.—Set large, smooth tomatoes in a greased pudding-dish, cut a slice from the top of each, scoop out the seeds, leaving the walls thickly lined with pulp. Have ready a cupful of corn grated from the cob, and seasoned with butter, pepper and salt. Fill the tomatoes with this, put on the upper slices, and pour a little gravy over all. Bake, covered, one hour in a moderate oven. Serve in the dish.

BOILED HAM.—Wash a ham thoroughly, scrubbing off all the rusty parts with the dust. Put on in plenty of cold water, and boil twenty minutes to the pound. Let it get almost cold in the water. If possible do not skin until perfectly cold on the following day, the fat will

then be white and prettily pitted, and the skin will leave it easily. Twist frilled paper about the shank, and lay in a bed of curled fresh parsley. Carve in thin slices.

LOBSTER CUTLETS.—Take a tinned lobster, mince it finely, and mix with a little fresh butter, salt, pepper and cayenne, according to taste, a blade or two of mace, and a dessert spoonful of anchovy sauce. Add one egg and a little flour, or if you have it ready a small quantity of cold boiled potato mashed. Divide the mixture into small crescent-shaped cutlets, brush them over with egg, dip them into bread-crumbs and fry them a light brown colour. If eaten cold they should be garnished with parsley, or arranged round a dish, the centre space being filled with watercress or small salad, or if served hot with melted butter and anchovy sauce.

LOVE'S STRENGTH.

THE gods of old, when man was made,
One day reclining 'neath the shade
Of high Olympus, formed a plan
To make a complement for man.
For man in his primeval state
Was not the being wise and great
And good and true that now is seen,
But was at first a mere machine.

And so the gods, with toil and pain,
Debated much, and long in vain,
What they should form with the intent
To be for man this complement.
A way at last they did discern,
And made the passions, each in turn,
Among the which are reckoned great
Remorse and friendship, love and hate.

And every god in turn essayed
The strength of what their skill had
made,
Decreeing that should be the strongest
That 'gainst their own strength held
out longest.
The lesser ones with ease they threw,
And so with hate and friendship too;
But when they came to love at last
He stuck so firm and held so fast

That, though the gods all tugged and
strained,
His steady hold he still retained;
Yea, though the gods were hot and
blown,
Yet love was neither moved nor thrown.
And so, as none his strength could
move,
They gave the palm perforce to love,
And yielded to his tender thrall,
And love was strongest of them all.

R. P.

MISCELLANEOUS.

A COMPANION statue to that of the late Prince Consort of her Majesty the Queen has been commissioned for Birmingham. The statue, which will be of white Sicilian marble, will be six feet in height, and her Majesty will be represented in a standing position, with her hands crossed, and in modern dress, with a coronet on her head, and the ribbon of the Order of the Garter round her shoulders.

THE French society for the Protection of Animals has, it is stated, just purchased a site for the construction of a large hospital for the reception of animals.

IT is a natural outcome of the passing rage for old-fashioned furniture that an American dealer should have gone into the remote parts of the New England States in America and bought up all the old furniture, chests of drawers with desk and book shelves conjoined; high back chairs; curiously inconvenient tables, etc., which the first settlers took out with them

from England. This ingenious artist is said to have made a wonderful collection, and his studio is the resort of all the amateur collectors in this department of aesthetic culture and decoration. Fabulous prices are expected to be given.

LADIES, it appears, accommodate their fashions to their husbands' pockets in the matter of ornaments, and on the principle that half a loaf is better than no bread, now affect silver as they cannot afford golden jewellery. As indicative of the fashion that prevails for silver trinkets, a firm in Birmingham recently received an order for 4,000 silver bracelets.

It is said that the post-card has decreased the sale of writing paper £2,500,000 annually in the United States.

A TEAM of English cricketers, -captained by Shaw, has left Nottingham for Queenstown, en route for the United States and Australia, several thousand persons accompanying them to the railway station.

THE first prize in the International Chess Tournament, which was brought to a close at Berlin the other day, has been awarded to Mr. Blackburne with a total of fourteen games, his most formidable opponent being M. Zukertort, who was credited with eleven games.

THE "Melbourne Argus" says the efforts made by the ladies of Melbourne to have spring seats provided for shopwomen have been crowned with success, nearly all the principal drapery establishments having undertaken to provide those humane conveniences.

THE Corporation of Liverpool has bought for £1,500 the large picture by Mr. Rossetti called "Dante's Dream."

OF their total wheat-crop, the United States are able to spare about one-third for exportation. In 1880, to the total deficit of fourteen million quarters in Great Britain, America contributed nine millions and a half. The great source of this abundant supply of wheat is the States west of the Mississippi, which produce more than threefold of the home demand.

THE ladies have it all their own way at Nantucket. Recently three of the pulpits in Nantucket were occupied by women on the same Sunday. But it is said this is the normal condition of affairs in that community where the females outnumber the males in the proportion of 16 to 1. The flagman at the railway crossing is kept by a woman. The restaurant at the Surf-Side is kept by a woman—and it is needless to say it is well kept—and women hold many positions usually held by men.

THE King of the Sandwich Islands left Liverpool on the 13th ult for New York in the White Star steamer Celtic.

THE Isle of Wight will soon be strongly fortified. Eight 38-ton guns are about to be mounted in Norman Fort, eight at Horse Sands Fort, two at Packpool Fort, and two at St. Helen's Fort.

SOME of the largest mirrors ever manufactured were recently made for the Grand Opera House at Paris. They measured forty-five by fifty-two feet, their weight being from 1,200 to 1,600 lb. each.

THE tenure of the Postmastership by Mr. Fawcett is likely to become historic. Not only is he completing arrangements for a trial of the return post-card system (as followed in Switzerland) but he is said further to have under consideration a project of much vaster scope. It is an open secret that extensive employers of labour have endeavoured to minimise their liabilities under the Employers' Act by insuring the lives of their employés against accident in certain companies, who have framed an exceptionally low rate of premium for such transactions. Mr. Fawcett's idea is to enable the country to reap what benefit can be obtained for this class of business, and to establish an Accident Assurance Fund, under the control of the postal authorities. His suggestion is that the premium be at the rate of 2s. 6d. per £100, £300 being the limit of insurance in the case of persons receiving weekly wages, and £1,000 the maximum sum for all not included under this head; insurances to be available for persons following any kind of occupation.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

M. H.—The following makes a good lotion for weak eyes: Put two teaspoonfuls of brandy or laudanum into a wineglassful of water; dip into the mixture a piece of fine linen, and apply to the eye, allowing some of the liquor to get within the eyelids.

T. W.—Felucca is the name of the largest and fastest description of boat used on the Mediterranean, having a low, graceful and buoyant hull, with a high stem and raking stern fitted with three masts, lateen sails, a jib set on a small bowsprit, and long, powerful oars to assist the progress in those lengthened calms so frequent on the above sea.

H. G.—The highest building in the world is St. Peter's at Rome, measuring from the base to the top of the cross 518 feet.

H. W.—A fish that travels over land is well known in China. At its pleasure it crosses fields, sometimes a mile in extent, on its way from one stream to another.

M. B.—Gin derives its name from genevieve, the French word for juniper. The chief flavouring in gin comes from juniper berries.

H. G.—The seven wonders of the ancient world were the pyramids of Egypt, the supposed tombs of the Egyptian Monarchs; the walls and hanging gardens of Babylon; the Mausoleum, or tomb of Mausolus, in Asia Minor; the temple of Diana, at Ephesus; the Colossus of Rhodes; the statue of Jupiter Olympus, at Athens; and the Pharos, or lighthouse of Ptolemy Philadelphus, near Alexandria.

W. S.—In No. 961 there is an obvious misprint which our correspondent has doubtless observed. The word "Delta" appears instead of "Delhi."

H. W. M.—Your MS. if forwarded for perusal would receive attention in due course.

E. P.—"No Name" was written by Wilkie Collins. The "Bridge of Sighs" is one of Tom Hood's poems.

T. B.—Freckles, if not of long standing, may sometimes be removed by applying to the skin glycerine diluted with a solution of borax and water. Apply before retiring at night, and let the solution dry on the face.

J. H.—A good red ink is made as follows: Best ground Brazil wood, two ounces; muriate of tin, half a dram; gum-arabic, two drams; boil down in thirty-two ounces of water to one half, and strain. If too thick, add a little water.

F. M.—Mustiness in wine can sometimes be removed by putting into the vessel containing it a few slices of bread toasted black. If this fail, a teaspoonful or two of sweet olive oil, well shaken up with the wine, will have the desired effect.

L. D. M.—If the American President and Vice-President should both die, the President pro tem. of the Senate would act until another was elected to fill the position. If all three should die the Speaker of the House would act.

M. H.—Children troubled with worms should be allowed considerable salt with their food. Sometimes a teaspoonful of salt in half a tumbler of water, taken before breakfast, will prove very efficacious. Salt is particularly obnoxious to all kinds of worms, and used in moderation is also beneficial to the digestive organs, exciting them to a healthy and vigorous action. Adults as well as children will derive much benefit from the free use of salt when annoyed by the animals named.

H. G.—Wear your rings on any but the wedding-ring finger—on this only the engagement-ring should be worn.

ISABEL M.—In the endeavour to please everybody a certain fabulous personage succeeded in pleasing nobody and incurred a serious loss in addition. For ourselves we endeavour—not unsuccessfully—to earn approval, and while we are sorry to have met with disappointment in the trifling matter to which our correspondent has alluded we have reason to believe that in the opinion of most people—lamentable as it might be—there would be no "hideous impossibility" in the execution of "refused," "virtuous," and even "innocent" lady who had been found guilty of murder by a jury of her countrymen (always lenient where possible to women) upon what seemed to be overwhelming evidence, and who steadfastly refused to establish her virtue or her innocence.

EMILY S., seventeen, tall, fair, blue eyes, of a loving disposition, would like to correspond with a dark young gentleman about twenty.

VIOLET and ROSA, two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen with a view to matrimony. Violet is twenty-four, tall, dark, dark hair and eyes, fond of home and music. Rosa is twenty-three, tall, fair, light hair, hazel eyes, fond of home and music.

LEO, twenty-seven, tall, dark, dark hair, hazel eyes, good-looking, would like to correspond with a young lady with a view to matrimony.

VIVIAN, twenty-one, tall, fair, grey eyes, fond of singing and dancing, would like to correspond with a young gentleman from twenty-two to twenty-four.

ESTHER and LAURA, two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen with a view to matrimony. Esther is twenty, tall, dark, of a loving disposition, fond of home. LAURA is eighteen, medium height, brown hair, hazel eyes, of a loving disposition, fond of home and children. Respondents must be about twenty-one, tall, dark, of a loving disposition.

TWO WOMEN.

GRANDMA sits in her great arm-chair;
Bairnly sweet is the soft spring air.

Through the latticed, lilac-shaded pane
She looks to the orchard beyond the lane,

And she catches the gleam of a woman's dress
As it flutters about in the wind's caress.

"That child is glad as the day is long—
Her lover is coming, her life's a song!"

Grandma sternly shakes her head.
"Love is folly—that's all!" she said.

Up from the orchard's flow'r bloom
Floats fragrance faint to the dark'ning room

Where grandma dreams, till a tender grace
And a softer light steal into her face.

For once again she is young and fair,
And twining roses in her hair.

Once again, blithe as the lark above,
She is only a girl, and a girl in love!

The years drop from her weary pain!
She is clasped in her lover's arms again!

The last faint glimmers of daylight die;
Stars tremble out in the purple sky.

Ere Dora flits up the garden path,
Sadly afraid of grandma's wrath.

With rose-red cheeks and flying hair
She nestles down by the old arm-chair.

"Grandma—Dick says—may we—may I?"
The faltering voice grows strangely shy.

But grandma presses the little hand;
"Yes, my dearie—I understand!

"He may have you, darling!" Not all in vain
Did grandma dream she was young again.

She gently twists a shining curl;
"Ah, me! the philosophy of a girl!

"Take the world's treasures—it's noblest, best,
And love will outweigh all the rest!"

And through the casement the moonlight cold
Streams on two heads—one grey, one gold.

K. T. M.

G. S. and N. A., two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen. G. S. is nineteen, medium height, auburn hair, blue eyes, good-looking, fond of home and dancing. N. A. is twenty, medium height, auburn hair, blue eyes, good-looking, fond of music and dancing.

PETRONILLA and FLORENCE, two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen. Petronilla is nineteen, tall, fair, good-looking, fond of music and dancing. Florence is twenty-three, medium height, dark, good-looking, fond of dancing. Respondents must be between twenty-one and twenty-five, tall, dark, good-looking, fond of dancing.

FRANCIS, nineteen, medium height, dark, good-looking, of a loving disposition, fond of home, would like to correspond with a young lady between sixteen and eighteen.

HAROLD and ROLAND, two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies with a view to matrimony. Harold is twenty-seven, medium height, dark, dark hair and eyes, good-looking, loving, fond of music and dancing. Roland is twenty-four, medium height, dark, good-looking, fond of dancing. Respondents must be between twenty-one and twenty-five, tall, dark, good-looking, fond of music and dancing.

STELLA and MAY, two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen with a view to matrimony. Stella is twenty-four, medium height, dark, brown hair and eyes, fond of home. May is twenty-three, medium height, fair, brown hair, blue eyes, good-looking, fond of music and dancing. Respondents must be between twenty-one and twenty-four, medium height, good-looking, fond of music and dancing.

IVA and JUAN, two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies with a view to matrimony. Iva is twenty-six, medium height, dark, good-looking, fond

of home and children. Juan is twenty-four, medium height, fair, good-looking, fond of home and children.

ALMA, ELSIE and GRACE, three friends, would like to correspond with three young gentlemen with a view to matrimony. Alma is twenty-five, medium height, dark, brown eyes, fond of home and children. Elsie is twenty-two, short, fair, golden hair, blue eyes. Grace is twenty, tall, dark, good-looking, of a loving disposition, fond of home.

TOSY, eighteen, medium height, fair, brown hair and eyes, good-looking, would like to correspond with a young gentleman between twenty and twenty-three.

GERALD, twenty-six, medium height, dark, light hair, grey eyes, would like to correspond with a young lady with a view to matrimony.

MARGARET, eighteen, tall, fair, would like to correspond with a young gentleman about twenty-one, tall, dark, good-looking.

EDITH and MABEL, two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen with a view to matrimony. Edith is seventeen, medium height, fair, blue eyes, of a loving disposition, fond of home and children. Mabel is tall, dark, blue eyes, good-looking, fond of home and music. Respondents must be from eighteen to twenty-one, tall, dark, good-looking.

LAURENCE, twenty-seven, tall, fair, dark hair and eyes, would like to correspond with a young lady with a view to matrimony.

CONSTANCE and FRANCES, two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen. Constance is eighteen, tall, dark hair, brown eyes, good-looking, of a loving disposition, fond of home and music. Frances is nineteen, medium height, fair hair, blue eyes, good-looking, of a loving disposition, fond of dancing.

NELLIE and AGNES, two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen. Nellie is twenty-one, medium height, fair, of a loving disposition, fond of dancing. Agnes is eighteen, medium height, dark, fond of music. Respondents must be medium height, dark.

ALMA, nineteen, tall, fair, fair hair, blue eyes, would like to correspond with a young gentleman between twenty and twenty-two.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

A. W. is responded to by—Annie, eighteen, medium height, fair, brown hair, blue eyes.

PILOT JACK by—Miriam, twenty-one, dark, medium height, loving.

CHARLES by—Esmeralda, seventeen, tall, brown hair, fond of music.

MILLIE by—Archibald H., twenty, medium height, dark, fond of home.

HARRY by—May, nineteen, tall, fair, loving, fond of home.

VENUS by—Hubert, tall, dark, good-looking.

GRETNA by—Egbert, twenty-one, tall, fair, fond of home and music.

CHARLEY by—Lottie, nineteen, medium height, fair.

JAMES by—Lydia, seventeen, tall, fair, of a loving disposition.

A. W. by—Ivy, nineteen, brown hair, hazel eyes, of a loving disposition, fond of dancing.

MAIN LIFT by—Polly B., seventeen, medium height, dark hair and eyes, good-looking, fond of singing.

VERITAS by—Madge, eighteen, tall, dark, of a loving disposition, fond of home and music.

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